

Vote in Massachusetts Primary on Tuesday

MIT's
Oldest and Largest
Newspaper



The Weather

Today: Mostly sunny, 40°F (4°C)
Tonight: Clear, cold, 23°F (-5°C)
Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, 44°F (7°C)

Details, Page 2

Volume 124, Number 8

Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Friday, February 27, 2004

Gates Speaks on Spam, Searching, Jobs

By Waseem S. Dahir
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

William H. Gates III described new innovations in spam filtering, image browsing, and portable media to an audience of over 1,000 MIT students yesterday.

Gates's speech, given in Kresge Auditorium, is part of a larger three-day speech mini-tour of five colleges across the United States: the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on Tuesday, Carnegie Mellon University and Cornell University on Wednesday, and MIT and Harvard yesterday.

"Software Breakthroughs: Solving the Toughest Problems in Computer Science," the title of Gates's speech, was essentially a brief history of the development of software and a prediction of what future software will do for us.

Following the speech, John V. Gutttag, the head of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, opened the floor up to the audience for questions for Gates.

Portability not limited to music

One of Gates's key points in his speech was that a major component of the new software revolution will be the increased portability and manageability of video, picture, and audio content.

As evidence of this, Gates showcased a device that Microsoft is scheduled to release this fall, known as a Portable Media Center.

The device, essentially a portable multimedia player, has a "40 gig disk, a beautiful LCD display, and you can just connect this

to a PC that's recording TV shows or has your movies, and it automatically downloads the movies, videos, photos on to this device that you can carry around and use anywhere you want," Gates said.

Another device showcasing mobile content that Gates demonstrated was the Smart Personal Objects Technology watch. The watch, which has a built-in processor, can receive short text messages, weather, news, and stock information and can send information as well.

"We can download arbitrary programs to this device," Gates said, which means that new programs for the watch can be loaded as soon as they become available.

The watch represents another trend in software that Gates refers to as "glance-able information."

Intelligent searching and viewing

Gates also showcased new technologies developed at Microsoft Research, designed to manage images and movies better. The interface attempts to sort the images intelligently, orienting them all the right way and allowing users to view them in a variety of different ways.

For example, a person can pick to see images that contain faces, are indoors versus outdoors, or are similar to other images in the database within varying degrees of strictness.

In a press round table yesterday morning with reporters from *The Tech*, *The Crimson*, *The Boston*

Bill Gates, Page 14



PETER R. RUSSO—THE TECH

Microsoft chief software architect William H. Gates III answers audience questions toward the end of his talk in Kresge Auditorium on Thursday afternoon. Gates has also visited Illinois, Cornell, Carnegie Mellon, and Harvard this week to speak about problems in the field of computer science.

Students Request Opinions On Ring

By Marissa Vogt
NEWS EDITOR

A group of sophomores launched a Web site this Tuesday morning to express their discontent over certain features on the 2006 Brass Rat. At the time of press, the site's survey had received 196 responses, 172 of which came from members of the Class of 2006.

M. Jordan Stanway '06, one of the creators of the Web site, said that the motivation behind the online survey came from discussions with his friends regarding the two Greek letters, phi and theta, under the Cambridge skyline.

We wanted "to get the Greek letters off of the Brass Rat, and we know that a lot of people feel the same way," he said. "We wanted to get a poll together and see if there was something we could get done."

The letters "don't represent the whole Greek community," Stanway said. "They don't represent the whole class," since 60 percent are not part of the Greek system.

Members of the ring committee declined to comment.

FAQs addressed on Web site

The brochure given out at the

Ring, Page 15



The Varsity Men's Swim Team calmly walks through Lobby 10 in swimsuits on Thursday just before noon, as spectators smile and gawk. The Speedo walk is an annual team tradition.

Diversity GIR Discussed At Recent Town Meeting

By Michael E. Rolish
STAFF REPORTER

The student representatives of the task force on the educational commons held their first town hall meeting with students on Tuesday evening.

The four representatives, Elizabeth L. Greenwood '05, Jessica B. Rhee '06, Christopher A. Suarez '06, and John R. Velasco '05, said they plan to hold similar meetings once or twice per term and to create an advisory committee to gather student input on the General Institute Requirements. In addition, Velasco said that they will set up a web site to facilitate student feedback and discussion.

Citing the taskforce on student life and learning, Velasco stressed the importance of communication between student representatives and the student body as a whole.

"Often times communication breaks down, but the student repre-

sentatives on this committee are committed to pursuing multiple avenues of student feedback, including the web site, UA Senate meetings, and open forums," said Velasco.

Meeting draws few students

Only nine students attended the meeting, most of whom were interested in adding a diversity requirement.

The task force also discussed its goals in evaluating the GIRs.

"Fifty years ago, MIT's role in society was to produce engineers, and this is obviously still a major goal of the institute," Suarez said. "However, we really want to determine if the current set of undergraduate requirements really provides the maximum benefit for the diverse set of people and interests we have at MIT today."

GIR, Page 16

FEATURES

Alex Nelson and Danchai Mekadnaumporn debate the merits of dating and being single in college.

OPINION

Andrew C. Thomas looks at Ralph Nader's run and his Democratic naysayers.

NEWS

UA elections begin with only one candidate running for president.

Page 7

Page 5

Page 13

World & Nation	2
Opinion	4
Features	7
Events Calendar	12
Sports	20

WORLD & NATION

Senate Panel Sets Deadline For Prewar Intelligence Handover

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Faced with a refusal by the Bush administration to provide certain documents related to prewar intelligence on Iraq, the Senate intelligence committee voted in a closed session on Thursday to move toward a possible subpoena, according to senior Congressional officials.

The bipartisan vote on the Republican-led panel sets a three-week deadline for a voluntary handover by the administration, after which the committee would employ unspecified "further action," which could only mean a subpoena, the officials said.

In a brief telephone interview, the top Democrat on the panel said that "there's no other interpretation" of the committee's action if the White House fails to turn over the documents by late March.

"We need these things, we want them, and if we don't get them, we will resort to other means," said the Democrat, Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia.

The plan approved by the panel calls for Sen. Rockefeller and Sen. Pat Roberts of Kansas, the top Republican, to issue an explicit warning in a letter to President Bush if the documents are not received, congressional officials said.

Bush Lifts Sanctions on Libya

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

President Bush issued an executive order on Thursday that will allow American companies to begin negotiating a return to Libya, but members of the Senate said that more sanctions would have to be lifted before the United States would be able to include Libya in its program to find alternative work for nuclear engineers.

Bush's action had been widely anticipated after Libya agreed in December to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Administration officials told Congress on Thursday that 55,000 pounds of "sensitive Libyan equipment" had already been flown from Libya to Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, including centrifuges that were still in crates from the A.Q. Khan Research Laboratories in Pakistan.

It was Khan's network of nuclear suppliers, American officials say, that provided Libya with nuclear technology, though the project was halted long before it could produce a weapon.

The partial lifting of sanctions enables Libya, which produces about 1.4 million barrels of oil a day, to draw back American oil companies. A number of American firms, including Marathon Oil, Occidental Petroleum and ConocoPhillips have already indicated interest in exploring new relationships with Libya.

U.S. And Seven States Sue To Block Oracle's Takeover of Peoplesoft

THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAN FRANCISCO

In a stinging setback for Oracle Corp., the Justice Department and seven states on Thursday filed a lawsuit to block Oracle's \$9.4 billion hostile takeover of PeopleSoft Inc.

The Justice Department said the deal would violate federal antitrust laws, reduce competition and lead to higher prices for customers.

"We took this action because it's the right thing to do to protect competition in an important market," said R. Hewitt Pate, assistant attorney general of antitrust, in a conference call after the decision was announced. The civil lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in San Francisco, near where both companies maintain their headquarters.

Oracle, based in Redwood Shores, Calif., and PeopleSoft, based in Pleasanton, Calif., are direct competitors in selling software used by businesses to manage their payroll, human resources and accounting operations.

Ex-Minister Declares British Eavesdropped on U.N. Chief

By Patrick E. Tyler

THE NEW YORK TIMES

LONDON

A former member of Prime Minister Tony Blair's Cabinet asserted Thursday that British intelligence services conducted electronic surveillance of the U.N. secretary-general, Kofi Annan, in the run-up to the Iraq war.

The former minister, Clare Short, who is still a member of Parliament, received a harsh rebuke from Blair, who told a news conference that Short had endangered Britain's national security with her "totally irresponsible" remarks. He would not comment on any allegations about espionage operations.

At the United Nations in New York, Annan's spokesman, Fred Eckhard, said at a news conference that it would be illegal to conduct electronic spying at the United Nations and that Annan would be disappointed if Britain had bugged his conversations.

Eckhard said efforts were under way to ensure the security of Annan's confidential conversations. He refused to say whether any listening devices had been found in Annan's office.

"We're throwing down a red flag and saying that if this is true, please stop it," Eckhard said.

The U.N. news conference added to the diplomatic embarrassment for Blair, who was said to be outraged that a member of his own Labor Party had spoken publicly about one of the most sensitive types of espionage.

Michael Howard, the Tory opposition leader, called Thursday's developments "a complete mess" for Britain.

The diplomatic tempest began when Short, who initially supported the war but later resigned from the Cabinet after the fall of Baghdad, told a BBC radio interviewer on Thursday morning that transcripts of Annan's private conversations were circulated last year among Blair's Cabinet members.

"I read some of the transcripts of the accounts of his conversations," she said, asserting that Annan's office was bugged. "These things are done, and in the case of Kofi's office, it's been done for some time."

She said she was so certain of the surveillance that she recalled "having conversations with Kofi in the run-up to war, thinking: 'Oh

dear, there will be a transcript of this, and people see what he and I are saying.'"

Short's remarks reflected the continued hemorrhaging of secrets related to espionage conducted during the bare-knuckled political debate at the United Nations in March 2003, as the Bush administration and Blair's government sought to overcome resistance from France, Germany, Russia and a number of smaller states that were opposed to a resolution that would authorize the Iraq war.

Short's blunt disclosure — which a number of experts said appeared to be a violation of the Official Secrets Act — underscored the unpopularity of the war in Britain a year on and the bitterness that has developed between Blair and a sizable contingent of rebels within his own party.

The revelation of targeted espionage in the executive suites of the United Nations came a day after Blair's government declined to prosecute a 29-year-old government linguist, Katharine Gun, who admitted leaking details of another bugging operation, also aimed at the United Nations, during the war debate last year.

Talks on North Korean Nukes Expose Major Disagreements

By Joseph Kahn

THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEIJING

The United States, North Korea and four other nations on Thursday discussed freezing North Korea's nuclear program in exchange for energy aid. But the continuing talks here also exposed stark disagreements that left diplomats wondering whether they could emerge with much more than a commitment to keep negotiating.

Both the United States and North Korea appeared to make modest concessions at the talks, several participants said, and the tone was described as constructive and lacking the invective that often punctuates discussions with North Korea. The two had private meetings during each

of the first two days as well as participating in group discussions.

But it was clear that the United States and North Korea made scant progress in resolving their differences over the scope of North Korea's nuclear program, the steps it would have to take to abolish it and the timing of aid packages for North Korea.

To underscore their differences, North Korea hurriedly convened international reporters on Thursday night and denounced the "hardline stance" of the United States for preventing progress.

"The second round of six-nation talks isn't making progress because of the United States' hardline position," Choe Jin Su, the North Korean ambassador in Beijing, was quoted as saying in an official statement read

aloud to reporters outside the North Korean Embassy.

"We will abandon our nuclear weapons program when the United States drops its hostile policy toward North Korea," Choe said. "The United States should take all the responsibility for the meeting not making progress."

It was not clear whether North Korea's statement was a warning that it planned to withdraw from the talks or merely public posturing before the third and possibly final day of negotiations on Friday.

Assessments of how well the talks were going depended on which party was doing the assessing. In addition to the United States and North Korea, Japan, South Korea, China and Russia are taking part in the discussions.

WEATHER

The Forecast...En Español

By Roberto F. Rondane

Looking for a random phrase to begin with my forecast, I opened a page of "Verbos Ingleses: Guia Practica." And I swear that the first phrase I found is an example for the use of "open up": "Another couple of warm days and the roses will have opened up." Well, I don't know whether the roses will open up or not, but this is at least a good description of the weather for the upcoming weekend.

A high pressure system has taken control of the weather from the Great Lakes area towards New England leaving us with the perspective of a string of dry and sunny days from today up until Monday. Also as a consequence of this beneficial anticyclone, storms are making their way towards the Atlantic crossing through southern states, leaving unusual snowfall over the northern parts of Georgia. Over the weekend the high pressure will move southward leaving most of the eastern part of the country under fair weather conditions.

Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny. High 40°F (4°C).

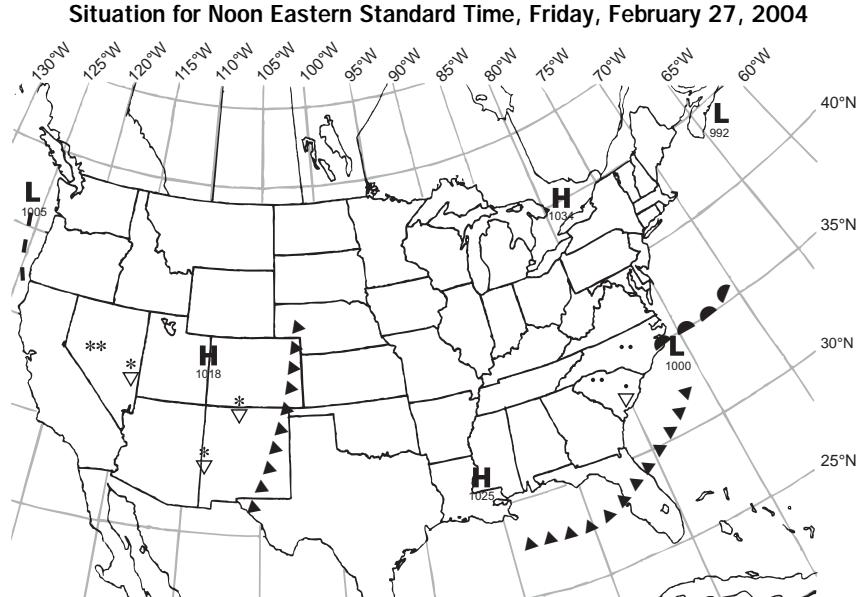
Tonight: Clear. Low 23°F (-5°C).

Saturday: Partly cloudy. High 44°F (7°C).

Sunday: Clear. Low 29°F (-2°C). High 47°F (8°C).

Monday: Clear. Low 34°F (1°C). High 49°F (9°C).

Situation for Noon Eastern Standard Time, Friday, February 27, 2004



Weather Systems

H High Pressure

L Low Pressure

§ Hurricane

Weather Fronts

— — — Trough

— — — Warm Front

▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ Cold Front

▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ Stationary Front

Precipitation Symbols

***** Snow

● Rain

◊ Showers

● Light

● ● Moderate

● ● ● Heavy

Other Symbols

≡ Fog

TR Thunderstorm

∞ Haze

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and *The Tech*

Qatar Arrests Russian Agents For Murder of Exiled Chechen

By Steven Lee Myers

THE NEW YORK TIMES

MOSCOW

Qatar has arrested two Russian secret agents and charged them with the murder of an exiled Chechen leader there, prompting a sharply worded rebuke from Russia on Thursday that accused Qatari authorities of violating international law.

In a statement, Russia's Foreign Ministry denied any Russian involvement in the death of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the former president of the Chechen republic who was killed on Feb. 13 when a bomb destroyed his car in Qatar's capital, Doha. It called the arrests "a provocation."

The statement, released the morning after Qatar's ambassador in Moscow was summoned to the Foreign Ministry late Wednesday night, was the first public acknowledgment that two men arrested by the authorities in Doha last week were not only Russian citizens but members of the secret services.

"They were legally assigned to the Russian Embassy in Qatar, conducting analytical work in connection with countering international terrorism, without violating local legislation in any way," Igor S. Ivanov, serving as acting foreign minister after President Vladimir V. Putin dismissed his government this week, said in the statement.

The arrests — which Ivanov said

involved "weapons and brute force" — threatened to worsen relations that had long been strained by Yandarbiyev's presence in the Persian Gulf state. They also provided a rare window into the clandestine world of Russia's secret services and their efforts to strangle international support for Chechnya's separatists.

A third Russian agent who was arrested has been released because he carried a diplomatic passport, Ivanov said in his statement. It was an unusual public acknowledgment that an intelligence agent served under diplomatic guise.

A secretary at Qatar's Embassy in Moscow said the ambassador, Mohammed Saad al-Kobaisi, would not comment on the matter.

Powell Suggests Haitian President Carefully Consider Leaving Office

By Christopher Marquis

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell distanced himself Thursday from Haiti's president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, saying the embattled leader needs to make a "careful examination" of whether he should step down.

Powell did not call for Aristide's departure — as his French counterpart, Dominique de Villepin, did Wednesday — but he signaled for the first time that Aristide's resignation might be in the best interests of Haiti.

"I think it is a very difficult time for the Haitian people," Powell said. "And I know that President Aristide

has the interest of the Haitian people at heart. I hope he will just examine the situation that he is in and make a careful examination of how best to serve the Haitian people at this time."

Aristide, in a television interview on Thursday, said he would not resign, and his Miami-based representative, Ira Kurzban, called Powell's remarks "disgraceful."

"The president is not leaving, and he's made it clear today that despite the rumors and psychological warfare, he's not leaving until his term is up in February 2006," Kurzban said.

Powell's comments were the most pointed indication yet from a Bush administration official that it

views Aristide's determination to serve out his term as an impediment to a peaceful resolution of a three-week-old uprising that has claimed the lives of about 70 people and left the northern half of the country in rebel control.

In Port-au-Prince, tensions mounted when rebel leaders said they were moving closer to an assault. At dusk flaming barricades went up across the city, and truckloads of armed masked men patrolled the streets.

Bernie Leon, manager of three terminals at the port, said more than a hundred people had looted shipping containers there. Many gas stations stopped selling fuel, leading to long lines at those that stayed open.

Regulators Issue New Recalls On Firestone Tires

THE NEW YORK TIMES

DETROIT

Auto safety regulators said Thursday that Bridgestone/Firestone North America had begun the first tire recall since the government started using a new early warning system created in the wake of the rollover problems of Ford Explorers equipped with Firestone tires in the late 1990s.

The latest recall again involves both Firestone and the Ford Motor Co. About 290,000 Firestone tires will be replaced on Ford Excursion sport utility vehicles after accidents that have been linked to five deaths. A Ford official said the tires, made at a plant in Joliette, Quebec, were used on about 80,000 Ford Excursions, including 2000, 2001, 2002 and some early 2003 models. The tires are Steeltex Radial A/T tires in size LT265/75R16, Load Range D.

While the size of the recall is small in comparison with the millions of Wilderness tires recalled by Ford and Firestone in 2000 and 2001, it raised fresh questions about Bridgestone/Firestone North America.

Curses! Fans Destroy Symbol Of Cubs' Futility

THE NEW YORK TIMES

CHICAGO

One baseball — one ordinary, slightly scuffed baseball — did something Thursday night that few movie stars or politicians can ever pull off in this city. It shut down a busy downtown street, lured camera crews from around the world, and drew a mob of Chicagoans to stand, transfixed, for hours in the chill.

They came not so much to see the little ball as to see it blown up. Or crushed, stomped or ripped to smithereens. The form of demolition, a subject of hype and speculation here for weeks, seemed to matter less than the promise that the hated ball, and all it meant, would be gone forever.

This was the ball from Game 6 of the NLCS last October, the one that a Chicago Cubs outfielder stretched up to catch just as a fan, Steve Bartman, reached for it, too. With that bobbled play, the Cubs, who had been just five outs from winning a trip to the World Series for the first time since 1945, collapsed. They lost that game and the next to the Florida Marlins, who went on to win the pennant and the World Series.

At precisely 7:31 p.m., Harry Caray's widow, Dutchie, gently led the crowd singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." When they were done, a row of police officers pushed people away from the ball, which awaited its doom in a clear, floodlit box hooked up with wires and explosives.

There were flashes, sparks and a series of bangs, and then poof: The ball was just a shaggy heap of cork, rubber and yarn. The room smelled like gunpowder, and somebody said, "The ball is dead."

Monday, March 1 at 7:00 PM • Room 10-250

The Second Annual Latke/Hamentashen* Debate

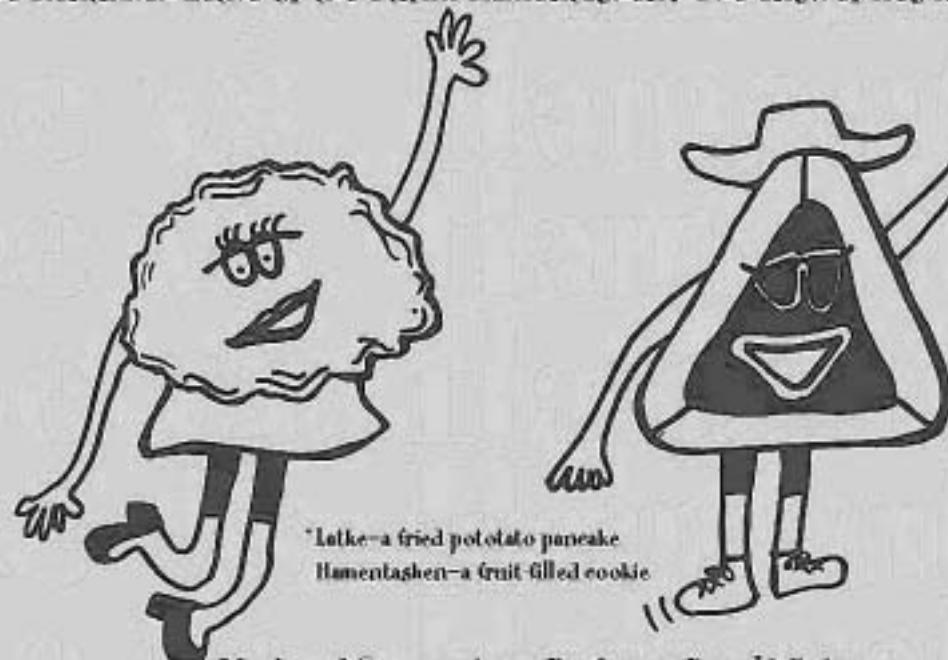
Which is superior — the Hanukkah Latke or the Purim Hamentashen? The answer lies in the wisdom of our MIT experts.

Professors
for the Latke

Edward Farhi
Physics

Jeffrey Hoffman
Aeronautics/Astronautics

Andrew Kadak
Nuclear Engineering



Master of Ceremonies — Professor Donald Sadoway

Professors
for the Hamentashen

Robert Rose
Material Science & Engineering

Robert Weinberg
Biology

Anne McCants
History

OPINION

Vote Kerry in Massachusetts Primary



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A year ago, the prospect of President George W. Bush failing to win a second term in office seemed remote. With his approval ratings riding high and no standout Democrat ready to challenge him, the 2004 presidential election

appeared little more than a formality.

Now, as November draws nearer and Bush's flaws become increasingly exposed, the possibility of a much-needed change in leadership is finally a realistic one. But defeating Bush will not be an easy task for the Democrats, and it is unfortunate that from the primaries, an optimal choice has not arisen. Yet because of the importance of the 2004 election, it is imperative that they pick a nominee who has both the electability required to win in critical swing states and the experience needed to lead the nation out of its current rut. Given those criteria, Massachusetts Senator John F. Kerry proves to be the best choice.

Kerry's remarkable wave of primary and caucus victories reflects his ability to win in all regions of the country. More importantly, he has outclassed his fellow candidates in states likely to tip the balance of this fall's election, including Michigan, Tennessee, and Missouri. All of this should come as no surprise, since Kerry possesses qualities that endear him even to many right-leaning voters. Currently serving his fourth term in the Senate, Kerry has the national and international experience demanded in the Oval Office, something that cannot be said of the young and unseasoned John Edwards. Furthermore, Kerry's impressive record of military service — critical in a time when patriotism especially matters to voters — and his poised and stately demeanor give him the edge over Bush and other Democrats in the issues of character that have long played an instrumental role in American presidential elections.

Electability, however, is far from Kerry's sole advantage over his competitors. His plan for revitalizing the domestic econo-

my is meticulous and well-reasoned. By repealing Bush's massive tax cuts for the wealthy, eliminating rampant corporate loopholes, and exercising increased fiscal responsibility, he will free up the money needed to hold the national debt in check and alleviate the excessive burden placed on the states since Bush took office — a burden that has resulted in state-level layoffs, tax hikes, and education cuts throughout the country.

And Kerry's strengths extend even further. In particular, his commitment to health care, the environment, gun control, and civil rights reflects his social conscience. Regarding international issues, Kerry's years on the Foreign Relations Committee have alerted him to the importance of maintaining strong formal and informal alliances abroad, and he will rebuild the goodwill that the Bush administration has squandered. Those who point out that he voted for the war in Iraq overlook the fact that so too did Edwards and, of course, Bush. As evidenced by his post-service stand against the Vietnam War and his apprehension about efforts in the Middle East, Kerry will think much more about the long term when debating war.

However, Kerry is far from the ideal candidate Democrats want to run. His voting history on NAFTA does not equal the stance he takes today. He also supports amending the Massachusetts Constitution to ban gay marriage. These actions and Republican eagerness to highlight them may cost Kerry votes that he would have otherwise secured. Yet the primaries have shown that voters are willing to overlook his past in order to achieve a greater goal: removing Bush from office.

Though Kerry's success to-date makes him the likely Democratic nominee, the 2000 presidential election provided a clear reminder that every vote matters. Be sure to exercise your fundamental right to vote in Tuesday's Massachusetts primaries, and if you're a Democrat or independent, make an intelligent choice for the future by selecting John Kerry.

Letters To The Editor

Crossing the Line

In her most recent hate-filled rant against Zionism, Aimee Smith crossed the line from the merely inflammatory into the blatantly anti-Semitic ["How to Bring Peaceful Coexistence Back to the Middle East," Feb. 17]. This isn't at all surprising, since her previous rhetoric on the subject of Israel has been ever-more strident and hysterical, so this latest piece makes sense in that context. However, with her assertions that Zionism is "linked at the conceptual level" with Nazism, and her direct call for the immediate dismantling of Israel, Dr. Smith trots out the subtle but very real anti-Semitism that is becoming alarmingly fashionable today. Let us make no mistake about it — these claims are nothing else than anti-Jewish hate speech. There can be no other name for casting the self-determination movement of the Jewish people as an outgrowth of one of history's most genocidal regimes, and for insisting that the one country in the world which does not deserve to exist is the Jewish state. Clearly, that does not fall within the bounds of reasonable political discourse.

What is both surprising and extremely upsetting is that *The Tech* chose to publish this, and neither noticed the boundary that was crossed, nor found it necessary to exercise its editorial discretion. Clearly, not every op-ed submission *The Tech* receives must end up in print. Their role should be to avoid printing outright Jew-hatred. We are calling not for censorship, but for journalistic responsibility. It is unacceptable to stir up hatred while hiding behind the First Amendment. For that, *The Tech* owes the MIT community an apology, and its editors need to be more scrupulous in the future about what they choose to print.

Fortunately, it seems that most of *The Tech*'s readers are quite familiar with Dr. Smith's twisted views, and pay them little attention. Nevertheless, as history suggests, it is not enough to simply ignore anti-Semitism, and its

effects can be combated only if it is actively denounced. We hope the MIT community will join us in our opposition to spreading such hatred.

Maxim Shusteff G, President, MIT Students for Israel

[Ed. Note: This letter was co-signed by 99 other members of the MIT community, including seven faculty members and most of the campus leadership of MIT Hillel.]

Courage Appreciated

I would like to take a moment to commend the anonymous author of "What a Difference a Year Makes" [Feb. 24] on her courage and strength and thank her for sharing her horrible story with us. I thought about that account all day after I read it — in the busy lunchtime line, in the quiet corridors of an empty lab, on my dark walk home. The inspiring self-dignity and confidence displayed by this woman in her recovery helped me to remember that it is important to be aware without being scared. I hope the publication of her account can help her and other victims in their recovery, and also serve to illuminate the aspects of our emotional and medical care services that demand improvement.

Walter Bender, Exec. Director, Media Lab

tance didn't even get highlighted on the front page, and it worries me to think that many other members of this community might have missed one of the few opportunities to get educated about such issues. I was part of the "Vagina Monologues" cast, and as happy as I am that it's our third year and *The Tech* decided to highlight this on the front page, I would've much rather seen some mention of this woman's account of rape on the front page.

Mariana Recalde '05

Ring Map Anomalies

If one extrapolates from recent history, roughly ten percent of the Class of 2006 will have done a UROP at the Media Lab by the time they graduate. So why has the Media Lab been left off the "hacker's map" on the Class of 2006 ring? Also, Senior House and most of the buildings along Vassar street are among the missing. It seems an arbitrary decision.

Walter Bender, Exec. Director, Media Lab

Erratum

A Feb. 20 article ["Ban Approved Despite Student Protests"] referred incorrectly to the Housing Office rule that was reviewed by a committee that recommended an unambiguous ban on flags and other materials on the exteriors of dormitories. The committee's report reviewed MIT's "Alterations and Additions" policy, which says, "Residents are not permitted to alter or add to any part of the building structure, mechanical, or electrical systems." It did not review the "Fire Safety" policy.

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Dissents are the opinions of signed members of the editorial board choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

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Don't Blame Me, I Voted For Kodos

Andrew C. Thomas

If ever I was convinced about the failure of two-party democracy, it's this week, as consumer advocate and former Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader announced his return to the ring to the sound of boos and catcalls from the Democratic loyal. Nader's announcement, nearly one week after the final implosion of the campaign of similar thinker Howard Dean, was not only brilliantly timed but wonderfully illustrative — that America's two-party system is to blame for many of the problems it faces, and that its voters deserve more than two choices with large piggy banks.

The idea that Ralph Nader is singularly responsible for Al Gore's defeat — and hence George Bush's victory — in the 2000 election is laughable, and nothing more than a continued, convenient ploy by a band of sore losers to cover their own failings, such as Gore's inability to win his home state of Tennessee, and other circumstances beyond their control, such as the highly questionable conduct of Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris (a Republican), who oversaw the removal of thousands of legitimate black (read: Democrat) voters from the rolls. Whatever votes may have been siphoned from Gore are a complete wash when every other factor is considered — including Gore's own supposed electability.

And the idea that Nader, or someone like him, will somehow be the big spoiler is equally laughable — and certainly not because anyone will have "learned anything" from the last election. The continued fragility of the voting system is underscored by the actions of Diebold, the producer of unreliable electronic voting machines, and its CEO, Walden O'Dell, who has a gross conflict of interest with his role as a Republican fundraiser and his commitment "to helping Ohio deliver its electoral votes to the president." Ironically enough, it's this sort of shady dealing that Nader has crusaded against in his role as a consumer advocate.

Nader is no fool; clearly his decision to oppose both the Green Party and the Democrats at this level is not a move to support President Bush; it's far more likely that his move is to ensure that disenchanted Deaniacs will keep an active interest in the management of their country. Nader's presence as a voter's advocate, therefore, can only serve to help the Democrats in the long run; the party needs a strong platform, and not just a weak opponent, in order to win over this country, and no one will be more pressing on the issues at hand than Nader.

Nader's role in the 2000 election should have been a wake-up call for voting reform, but not just by replacing unreliable punch card voting methods. Surely Nader's role must be to remind us that choosing between the lesser of two evils every four years is no way to guide a country towards prosperity. Third parties will remain jokes and spoilers in the eyes of voters, who are resigned to coin flipping or peer pressure to make up their mind between two similar entities, unless they are given more options.

Once again atop his soapbox, Nader has an opportunity to make his message heard. And this would be an excellent time for him to plug voting reform — the very issue that brings to mind his name. Nader is on the record for supporting preferential ballot methods like instant runoff voting, and a man of his prudence could certainly bring the issue up with a minimum of humiliation. Certainly there are many other issues that deserve attention, but if there were ever an issue calling out to Nader and his remaining supporters, it's got to be this.

Nader's legacy is a proud one; he's a man who has fought tirelessly for many years in the interests of the people. As a man whose political career has been fashioned from the same cloth, his symbolism cannot possibly be overlooked. Whether he will choose to throw his weight behind the Democrats is ultimately irrelevant — this kind of pressure can, in the end, only help them face up to their own responsibility and learn to work together. And isn't the spirit of grassroots democracy and cooperation the message Nader is trying to spread?

Unproductive Polarization on Israel-Palestine Issue

David Glasser

Like Chaim Kutnicki, I attended DramaShop's performance of Professor Alan Brody's "The Company of Angels," an excellent production which kept me on the verge of tears for most of the play.

Letter to the Editor

For me, the climactic moment was near the end of the second act, when news of the United Nations vote to create Israel reached the Yiddish theatre company and all of the characters instantly stopped their squabbling and broke out in the Israeli national anthem, Hatikva. In an era where some of the country's policies often make it tough to explain Israel's importance, this moment, coming near the end of a play filled with injustice and intolerance towards Jews, really summed up the reasons that I consider myself a supporter of Israel.

After watching the play, I noticed that Brody had written, as the last paragraph of a page-long "Author's Note," that, as Kutnicki quoted in a letter to the editor ["When History Becomes Hijacked," Feb. 20], "the play is a reminder of what it means for any people to be homeless and stateless," and that he hoped that Company "might help the people who see it to understand how important a home is to the Palestinians who have been driven to their experience of despair by historical circumstance." To me, this statement was a refreshing reminder that it's still possible to be a strong supporter of Israel's existence without being totally blind to the plight of Palestinians today. Far from "placing the onus

on the Israeli people for the suffering of the Palestinians with the same moral weight as ... silent bystanders after the Holocaust," Brody's note merely reminded watchers that Jews are not the only people in history to have suffered, nor have we never been in a position of power over another culture.

Reading Kutnicki's reaction does not anger me in the way that, say, Aimee Smith's barely factual hatemongering screed in last week's *Tech* did ["How to Bring Peaceful Coexistence Back to the Middle East," Feb. 17]. Rather, it disappointed me

certainly didn't.

Before coming to MIT, I considered myself to be relatively pro-Israel, even if I had my doubts about some specific policies. But here on campus, both the anti-Zionists and the anti-Palestinian activists are right — there is no dialogue. I feel uncomfortable discussing my opinions on Israel in any sort of public setting, simply because of this polarization that permeates these issues here. Any event, any speaker, any little thing must be interpreted as objectively landing in one camp or the other, with little realization of the

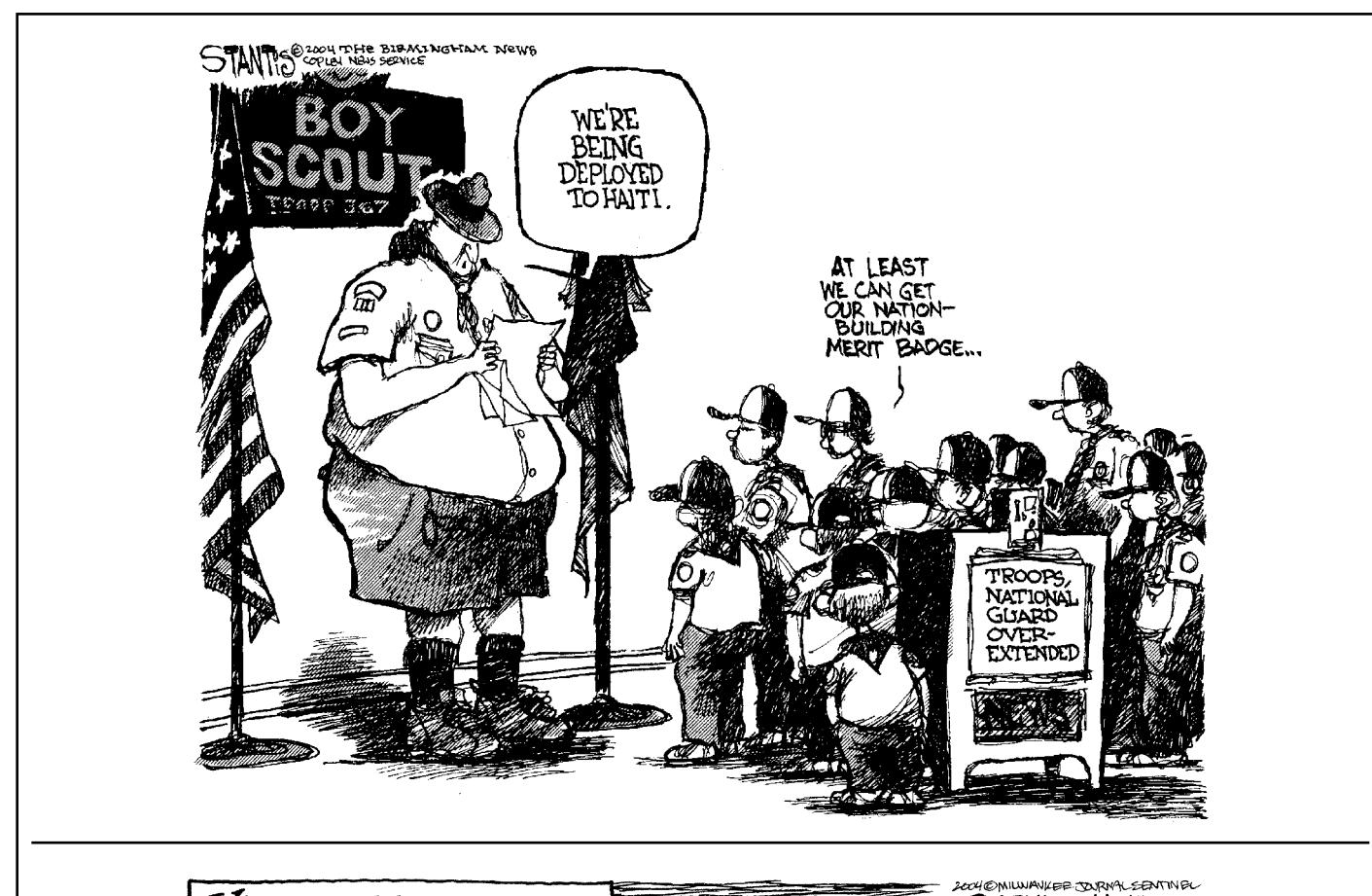
fact that all people living in the Promised Land, regardless of race or religion, have been persecuted and have persecuted others over the long centuries. A friend of mine at Columbia University started a "Middle East Initiative" group that sought to bring highly interested people on all sides of these problems together to engage in a

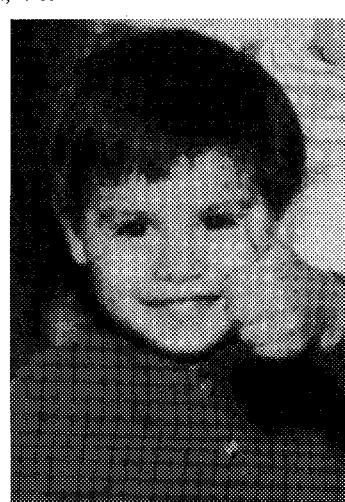
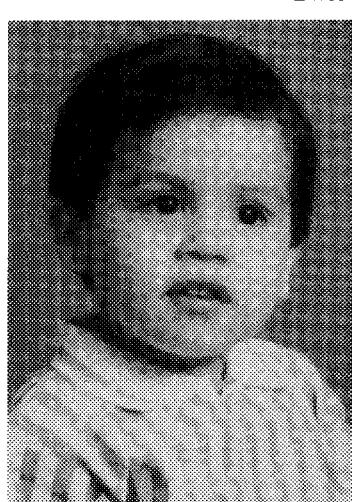
dialogue — not necessarily to come to any agreements, but just to hear something other than their own views and the polar opposites echoed back and forth endlessly. The lack of a similar project at MIT (or at most colleges, for that matter) is evident in the pages of every *Tech*.

I'm sorry that Kutnicki let an excellent show be overshadowed by a few words in its program, but I'm even more sorry that it's so hard to see anything related to the Middle East in any other way.

David Glasser is a member of the class of 2006.

I feel uncomfortable discussing my opinions on Israel in any sort of public setting, simply because of this polarization that permeates these issues here.





Stevie Ace Flores.

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FEATURES

Sex and the SafeRide

Dating, With Benefits

By Alex Nelson

FEATURES COLUMNIST

Valentine's Day has come and gone. It gives those of us in a relationship a reason to celebrate and those of us who are currently unattached a reason to feel even more detached.

Are relationships really a reason to celebrate? With so many cynical singles out there, are there any truly happy couples? Certainly they exist, but possibly they're so wrapped up in their relationship to tell us about it. Or maybe these fortunate couples want to spare us their happiness by keeping it to themselves.

Either way, there are many reasons for couples to be happier than singles. Even the strangest relationships afford many mutual benefits to the lovers involved.

Mutual Attraction

Relationships are generally based on some form of attraction; whether it is physical or emotional, it must exist. Knowing someone is attracted to you can greatly increase your self-confidence and self-esteem. Maintaining that interest is a key motivator when establishing or building a relationship. This attraction can motivate a person to put extra effort into being the best he or she can be.

After a period of time, attraction may no longer play the same role as it did initially. As a couple becomes more comfortable with itself, the need to impress and be impressed tends to dwindle. However, this chemistry or attraction still serves to keep a couple from entering the "friend zone" and holds the relationship together.

Mutual Interest

Relationships can not persist on chemistry alone. Couples also benefit from the many similarities they often share. Whether they enjoy going out for sushi, arguing about politics, or dancing at the clubs, couples know how to have fun together. Having another person who is there, waiting, and wanting to spend time with you is like a permanent safety.

On a Friday night, you don't have to make plans in advance — you just know. When you need a companion for a concert or night on the town, you always know who to ask. In a relationship, you want to share your experiences with your significant other.

Sharing interests is included in the sharing of experiences. Everyone is different and, naturally, everyone has something to share. Being involved and interested in someone means learning their likes and dislikes as well as possibly experiencing them for yourself.

self. Dating is a good way to try new things and see new perspectives.

Dating can also be a lot of fun — it isn't all about seriousness and commitment. People date at all commitment levels. Whether a person dates casually or is involved in a long-term relationship, dating is a good way to relieve stress and be social. Going out to dinner and the movies can be a nice break from all that time spent on psets!

Mutual Support

Having a person who cares about you changes the way you live your life. The support another person has to offer someone he or she loves is incomparable to any other kind of support. In a relationship, your significant other is there for you in good times and in bad. On a good day, he is there to make you laugh and watch you smile. On a bad day, he can wipe away your tears and give you a hug that will make the world around you disappear.

In a relationship, you always have someone to crab at when the day is over. When that inconsiderate professor doesn't understand that you have three exams in one week and a problem set and lab report on top of that, you always have someone to talk to — someone that really does care. Everyone needs a little sympathy and pity sometimes, and it's hard to know exactly where to find it especially at MIT where life is difficult for all.

Mutual Satisfaction

Couples are intimate at different times for different reasons. Kissing, touching, and everything else brings you as close to your partner as you possibly can be.

Sex adds vulnerability to the relationship. Opening yourself up to a person completely and nakedly leads to a higher level of emotional connection. Letting another person take control of your body and how it feels can leave you feeling powerless but O-mazing. Afterwards, lying there peacefully, a certain lethargy takes over as time stops and the world around you remains unimportant as you lie in his arms.

In a true loving relationship, sex is about pleasing the other person and showing them all the love you want to give them. The giving part of sex allows sex to be an intimate experience of generosity and appreciation.

In a relationship, you get so much only because you must give that much to the other person. If you are a generous and loving person, being in a relationship will come naturally to you and provide you with a constant source of love and support in return.

By Danchai Mekadenaumporn

FEATURES COLUMNIST

"What's so great about being single?"

I used to ask myself this when I was in a relationship. My friends would revel in their singleness; they'd tell me that they couldn't be tied down in a relationship like me. I wondered what they saw in that life and I just told myself that they didn't know what they were missing.

I think I ask myself that question a lot more these days. I've been single for six months, and I'm starting to see what my old self never did. Sure, there were things that were great about being in a relationship. You always had someone to be with on the weekends. You could feel sorry for all those people who envied you because you had such a great girlfriend. You felt like you were more desirable because you were "a forbidden fruit."

I suppose that I've always been a relationship type of guy, but being single has given me an entirely new perspective. If there's one word that can sum it all up, this is it: freedom.

When you're single, you have the freedom to do whatever the hell you want whenever the hell you want. There's a select few of you who are engaged in open relationships or just have really cool girlfriends.

For the rest of you, it's just another cliché: you're stuck with the ball and chain. You end up making excuses about why you can't go out with the guys: you have to meet her friends, it's your two and a half month anniversary, or you're being forced to go watch the ballet.

As a single man, the only person you are accountable to is yourself. You don't have to leave the toilet seat down, remember birthdays, holidays, or anniversaries. You don't have to go shopping for shoes when you'd rather be watching the game and you're not responsible for taking her out to Top of the Hub for Valentine's Day.

This might sound really selfish, but being single means that I don't have to spend money on anyone besides myself. Actually, that's the point of being single; you can be totally selfish and not have to feel guilty about it. (This is, of course, in the context of being single as

Single and Loving It

opposed to being taken. Laws still apply, so you're still accountable to society at large.)

Dating is possible again. Yes, when you're in a relationship you can go on dates. However, once you get comfortable, they cease to be a big deal. The single life allows you to experience everything for the first time, every time. Everything is still new and exciting. You can go on a first date every week; butterflies and goosebumps are still in effect. That tingling feeling after a first kiss, the ambiguity of passing glances, and the entire courting system are back into action.

Of course, you can also feel better about flirting, messing around, hooking up, engaging in play, etc. The guilt is gone, the freshness is here, and you can kiss a new girl every weekend, provided you have that kind of skill. You also don't have to worry about the upkeep that goes into a relationship.

Have you read any of my other columns? It's like a full time job trying to make sure two people who are together aren't constantly at each other's throats. Eventually people fight. You've seen those couples at restaurants, parties, and around campus. They're giving each other the silent treatment, looks of contempt, or they're ignoring each other completely. Who wants that kind of stress? Not me, not right now. I've got enough work to do as it is.

With all of this evidence, you must be wondering why single people can't seem to find peace in their solitude. Sometimes people end up truly believing that the "grass is greener." Others may just fear being alone. There are still others who look for people to complement the qualities they themselves lack.

I think it's because society drills it into your head that you must be a loser if you can't find someone to be with. They produce countless movies, books, and songs about falling in love, being in love, and riding off into the sunset to live happily ever after. It's all pretty sickening.

Don't misunderstand me — I'm not bitter about love or relationships, and I don't hate women. I'm actually waiting around for the right person just like all of you. However, all I'm saying is that if you enjoy the time that you have while you're single, the time that you spend in a relationship will be that much better.

Now who would argue against that?

How to Eat Like an Asian

Manners

By Mark Liao

FEATURES COLUMNIST



Students, faculty, and administration... lend me your ears. There is an epidemic sweeping the nation, and MIT is right in the middle of it all. It's called the Asian Male Crisis, or AMC for short.

Everywhere you look, most of the interracial relationships around MIT consist of a *female* Asian with a non-Asian counterpart. It's gotten so bad that if an Asian guy is walking down Newbury with a — *gasp* — white girlfriend around his arm, every other Asian guy between Copley Square and Ankara's has his spider-sense going crazy; each of us has to consciously fight the urge to run up and shake his hand. Simply being in close proximity to this legend allows us to live vicariously through him, even if it's just for those fleeting three seconds, as the Asian Dude with a White Chick.

Now I could bitch and moan and gripe about this whole situation. Instead, I'm going to take the higher road. As Brandon Fraser's character in "Blast From the Past" says, "Manners are a way of showing other people we care about them." I will teach you the proper way to conduct yourself at the dinner table.

That way, when you're at dinner with your Asian counterpart's parents, you'll be able to win them over with more than just your winning personality. All I ask in return is that you send over a brown-haired blue-eyed second

cousin my way every once in a while, eh?

So here's the scenario: you've been dating this Chinese girl for three months now and her folks happen to be coming to Boston next week for her grandma's birthday. Naturally, all twenty-something of her closest relatives will be there. She really wants to show you off and, hopefully, you want to make the best impression possible. Let's walk through the dos and don'ts of a typical dinner with the evil eyes of the entire Asian clan judging your every move.

When first being seated, take a moment to survey the scene. You should see a giant circular table fitted with a Lazy Susan. First thing first, allow the *eldest* member of the family to sit at the head of the table. Generally speaking, the head of the table is the point where the circular table runs tangent to a wall with a giant, gaudy, gold Phoenix and Dragon. Otherwise, allow them to seat themselves the point furthest from where most of the traffic flows.

From there, the next priority is seating the next eldest people to one side of the elders and the *youngest* members to the other side (followed by their parents.) This is because scalding bowls of soup don't deal well with rambunctious little firecrackers, so we need to hide them furthest away from where the food will be served.

Next step: tea. The most important thing to keep in mind with tea is to keep it flowing. Serving tea is a sign of respect. Seeing how most Asian cultures are patriarchal by nature, you serve the eldest male first, followed by his counterpart, and so on and so forth. If it

comes down to it, age takes precedent before gender.

Throughout the meal, keep your eyes out for empty cups. Since these cups are entirely too small to begin with, you will have many opportunities to serve. Don't be alarmed if the person you're serving starts tapping his hand on the table behind his cup; simply keep pouring until he stops or the cup's about to overflow.

Also, the teapots have unforgiving, small handles. Put your first and middle finger through the handle and your ring finger to support the handle from outside. If you have pudgy fingers, life sucks for you. Lastly, once the pot is empty, prop up the lid ever so slightly. This will tell servers that the pot needs more hot water.

Almost all types of Asian meals are served family-style: many community dishes are placed in the middle and are shared amongst the group. Therefore you should be very careful of your actions.

First and foremost, the biggest faux pas you can make is reaching for a dish that has just been placed on the table — that's just rude. Your safest bet would be waiting until someone else has started, usually the eldest person at the table. However it is common for the host to pressure the most important guest to start.

This is where you can gain bonus points: show your generosity by diverting the attention to the youngest person at the table (hopefully her kid brother) and say that he should be first. You'll win major points from everyone

at the table; besides, being that kid brother growing up kicked major ass. The same goes for finishing off a dish; try not to be the guy who takes the last serving. You can convince the crowd that the youngest child can have it by saying he needs to eat more because he's still growing.

There are other subtleties that you may be unaware of but are definitely important to remember. Try to avoid having any contact with the Lazy Susan when someone else is taking food from a dish; it is not a toy, but a food-serving device. When taking food from a dish, remember to take small portions. For example, if it's a plate of shrimp, take at most three pieces. You can get fat and be a jackass when it's just you two going out.

Also, it's food up to mouth, not head down to food; bowls containing rice *can* be brought up to the mouth. Otherwise, I can hear her mother's internal dialogue now: "He eats like a bum off the street." That's probably not the image you want to be presenting.

Along those same lines, do not, under any circumstances, selectively take food from dishes. Say there's a plate of kung pao chicken. No matter how much you love chicken and hate peanuts, don't just take pieces of chicken. Spoon naturally and let the nuts fall how they will. If you must, just eat whatever chicken you got and leave the peanuts on your plate, then go back for more.

That's all the room I get for this time. We might pick up this topic later on, maybe title it "How To Impress Asian Parents." Until then, remember, brown-haired blue-eyed girls.

What's Next?

Don't Get Caught Up In the Job Market Hype

By Ian Ybarra
FEATURES COLUMNIST



On Monday I received an e-mail with a subject line that read, "Fwd: Good News for Class of 2004 re entry-level jobs." Those who know me would assume it would pique my interest. After all, I am in the class of 2004 and pay much attention to the hubbub about students getting jobs after college.

However, I must have been extraordinarily excited to open the e-mail, given the circumstances. Firstly, I was battling a three-day backlog on MIT Webmail, which, despite sporting a spiffy new homepage, still provides "just enough functionality for occasional use." Secondly, I was at my parents' home in Altamont, Kansas, which boasts a population of 1,000 and a dial-up connection that had me surfing at a nice clip of 26.4 kbps.

The e-mail contained a press release from CollegeGrad.com with the headline: "College Grad Hiring Up 12.9% for 2004: CollegeGrad.com Names Top 500 Entry Level Employers." Good news, right?

As much as I want to, I can't honestly describe the press release in the style of Linda Richman, Mike Myers' character who hosts the classic "Saturday Night Live" skit "Coffee Talk" — "It's neither good nor news... discuss."

It was news, in fact. But I can say that the press release made me get a little "verklempt." I was frozen in confusion, unable to utter a word. That is, until it made me laugh aloud a few times.

The news was neither good nor meaningful. Also, it included a few things that were downright ridiculous. Finally, it made me wonder if the career gurus it quoted, including the President and Founder of CollegeGrad.com, actually need new jobs for themselves.

This week I'll explain why the news is absolutely neutral and meaningless. Next week I'll expound upon the press release's ridiculous bits and ponder the incompetence of a few career advisors. Here we go.

How good is it, really, that 500 employers CollegeGrad.com surveyed say they're going

to offer 12.9 percent more entry-level jobs than they did last year?

The press release doesn't even compare that growth rate to CollegeGrad.com's own survey results from last year. I had to find a cached page of last year's press release to learn that the 2003 survey yielded a 2.3 percent increase from the previous year. I'm confident that 12.9 percent is greater than 2.3 percent, but I'm not sure how that affects our lives. Perhaps we could estimate that for every ten of our friends who didn't get jobs last year, there will only be nine of our friends who don't get jobs this year. I feel better already. How about you?

Why didn't CollegeGrad.com also project how many job offers will be rescinded next fall? Yeah, it's dirty business, but it's reality. Or how about telling us the percent increase in college graduates? The National Center for Educational Statistics projects the number of Bachelor degrees conferred in the United States to increase at an average compound rate of about 1.6 percent per year throughout the next decade. Yup, 12.9 percent is greater than that, too. But so was last year's 2.3 percent, and there was still panic over so many college grads being unemployed.

Speaking of unemployed graduates of recent years, won't they be battling the '04 graduates for these entry-level jobs? No doubt they're hungry for work. They have spent months holed up with the folks, repeatedly answering to everyone — from their parents' mechanic to old sweethearts to the local librarian whose four-pound hair bun is perpetually forcing her haughty eyes over her spectacles — as to why they aren't doing anything with that degree of theirs. That would definitely motivate me to get a job. I'm still "safely" enrolled as a full-time college student and I've been fielding those questions at a rate of eight per day while I've been in Kansas this week.

Clearly, if there is sense to be made of this "Good News for Class of 2004," we should leave the task to *The Wall Street Journal*. We shouldn't hold our breath, though. Instead, we should focus on figuring out what we really want to do next and making ourselves better prepared than everyone else in the world to do just that. Or, as they say in Kansas, "Keep on keepin' on."

Death by Zeitgeist

Or How I Learned to Quit Smoking and Love the Gum

By Devdoot Majumdar
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR



There's a piece of Nicorette resting between my gums and my lips right now. I'm not supposed to chew it or swallow it. Instead, it's my own personal almost-intravenous nicotine drip. It takes an eternity for the gum to kick in, compared to the seven seconds it takes me to smile every time I light up. Used to light up, that is.

Last month, I decided it was time to quit smoking. After a year long tribute to the middle-aged white woman, my run with the menthol cigarette has ended. I suppose the irony of being a bio major with a cancer addiction finally caught up with me. While I was on this whole "let's write about something positive" kick, I thought I might chronicle my year of Koolness.

Growing up, the absolute worst kind of people in the world to me were "upper crust" real estate agents. And every single middle-aged, divorced, bourgeois, aspirant, she-banshee real estate agent I saw was also a chimney-stack of menthol smoke. Somehow, in the process of discovering myself in college, I became that she-banshee.

It all started with a profoundly dumb student film. Imaginatively called *The Vendor*, it was a Course VI dork's demonstration to the world that he could cram in as much bad acting as possible in 70 minutes (light saber scene included). I had the great job of playing the evil, old, bitter guy.

Some might be misled into believing I have the "old and bitter" role down cold. Unfortunately, my acting skills have always been of midnight infomercial quality. As a result, it was suggested that I use a cigar as a prop to enhance my malice factor. So, I bought myself a pack of chocolate-flavored cigars and aimed for "better than SNL" acting.

This was fine, only nobody ever sent me the memo that said that you're not supposed to inhale cigar smoke. Apparently the mouth cancer is for cigar smokers whereas the more lucrative lung cancer is reserved exclusively for cigarette smokers (who inhale, you see).

After an afternoon shooting in Central Square, I managed to inhale three hours straight of chocolate cigar. This was perhaps the longest, greatest artificial high that I've ever felt. So you see, it was never about coolness for me — it was all about the sweet release of smoking.

Positive Sinking

Naked Fat Cats Drinking Soda

By Akshay Patil
FEATURES EDITOR



It's amazing. I go through the normal course of my life and I encounter numerous people (many whom I know well, many whom I really don't know that well) who tell me what I should write my column about.

I'll be at a party and someone will say, "Hey, you know what you should write about?" and I go, "No, I don't," and then they tell me something and I forget it. Or maybe I'll be at a dinner party (Ha! Like I go to dinner parties) and we'll talk about naked people in cars spanking people not in cars with big fish... then someone will say, "I'll bet you'll turn this into a column" but I don't.

What I inevitably do in these situations is tell the person to send e-mail to sinking@mit.edu because really, I won't remember it any other way. My memory is horrible. So you can imagine the sorrow I feel when after a week chock-full of third-party suggestions, I sit down to write my column and discover that I haven't received any sinking e-mails that week.

Not a single, solitary, lonely, abandoned, orphaned e-mail. Not one of you thought about poor Jimmy, with his broken leg and infantile osteoporosis who the doctors said had only a week to live, and all the little guy wanted was to read a new and funny "Positive Sinking" but you cold, heartless bastards wouldn't do it for him, would you?

Noooo, you all sat around in your fat-cat dorm rooms and drank your high class soda with your pinky sticking out and played online Texas hold 'em for fake money because that's the sort of person you are, not thinking about poor Timmy, or Jimmy, or whatever the hell his name was which doesn't matter since he's fictional anyways and it doesn't change the fact that not once did your thoughts ever turn, for the slightest instance, in his poor, miserable direction.

Well, actually, that's not totally true. I did receive the following e-mail:

Bravo Mr. Sinking Brav.

— Mr. Gupta (from a dark cubicle in Mumbai, writing C++ code for a pitance and sending this email from an unsuspecting hotmail user's email account that I hacked into. Hey, who wrote "your job is mine" on this wall?)

This just doesn't inspire me, doesn't get me going as much as something like naked people with fish does. So I sit here, and wonder what in the dickens to write about... Fish? Naked people? Indian programmers? Naked Indian programmers? Naked Indian programmers with fish? What the hell was I doing at this party? Why can't I remember?

Well, I guess we'll just have to wait 'til next week for something amusing to appear on these not so-hallowed pages of *Das Tech*. Maybe in the meantime I should start carrying around a reporter's notebook — you know, like the kind real reporters use? Where they write all sorts of important information concerning hard-hitting real news topics.

Except my notebook will probably have jumbles of meaningless words in it... things like "naked people with fish?" or "monkeys with finger polish?" But I still wouldn't have e-mails to start off my columns with... to provide an anchor and tether for the long and arduous journey my brain takes through the dark and deep nonsensical world I find myself exploring every time I begin, what we here at "Positive Sinking" like to call, "the writing process."

Do you have plans for world domination? Does your cat keep you up at night? Does it always rain on your parade or picnic? Try e-mailing sinking@mit.edu with some of your more interesting thoughts, musings, or business plans. Each e-mail sent comes with a free plastic bag and you can write it off for massive tax-deductions as a donation to the "Save Jimmy/Timmy/Whatever-his-name-was" fund. Bless you.

The cigar, however, was a terribly inefficient way to smoke, once I realized I couldn't even inhale it. Moving right along, I decided to find my inner cigarette smoker. Like many, I began with the clove cigarette, which uses the very strong clove flavor to mask the fact that you're inhaling what asphyxiates thousands every year: smoke.

In the coming months, I would discover the hip but subtle "Kamel Red Light," the gay favorite "Parliament Menthol Light," and of course the real estate agent's dreamy golden box: the "Marlboro Light." For those who care, I never really got hip enough to try "American Spirit" or (whoa, now) roll my own cigarettes.

There were a few salient moments that permeated my death trek. There was the time that I went up to the roof of Baker to have a smoke and fainted on the elevator on the way down. I woke up, frightened both because of what had happened and because of all of the "oh my god, Becky" sorority girls who have now turned my dorm into the sorority mixer dorm.

There was the time that I couldn't resist a cigarette while at home. Now, my parents are fantastic inasmuch as they can't particularly smell the smoke. When you come from a

country where smoking is what the real men do (because that's what the British did, I suppose), smoking is not as repugnant as it is to those among you who creamed themselves when the Z-Center arrived.

So, once at home, there was the 2 a.m. experience of crouching behind my car with the trunk open and lighting up. After all, if I got called on it, I could just say I had left something in the car. The overwhelming sense of how pathetic I am started setting in right about then, this last Christmas break.

Aside from that, I've got a dead grandfather and uncle owing to the nasty habit. So, after loading up on \$80 worth of Nicorette, I quit. It's been difficult, and I've cheated. But as I'm going to have to be saccharine and endearing next year to make friends in graduate school, it was just about time to retire the habit.

I suppose the moral of the story is this — even a predisposed, low self-control, natural drug addict like myself can quit. I'm certainly not a better person for it. And like the 60 percent of people who end up smoking again after a year of quitting, I might end up on the rebound. But the next time you see some self-possessed, smug loser with a cigarette, remember my story. I might just be dead by then.

Become a columnist.

If you think you can handle the hate mail, and the occasional fan mail, let us know that you can write better than us, and send us an email at features@tt.mit.edu.

Give us some wit. We'll give you an audience.



The Kinaesthetics Lab will put on a production entitled "Juxtaposition" in Kresge Little Theatre at 8 p.m. on Saturday. Clockwise from above:

Hannah Blitzblau G (front) and Irit Rapple '04 perform "Working Draft," to music composed by Martin Case.

Liz MacEnulty, William B. Ouimet G, and Irit Rapple '04 perform a piece they choreographed, entitled "Blindsight." The music was composed by Martin Case and costumes were designed by Kim's Fashion Design.

Anna D. Bergren '05 (front) and Yael E. Marshall '05 perform a piece called "Interruptions," choreographed by Rebecca Rice and music by Elena Ruehr.

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FUN PAGES

Page
10

Trio

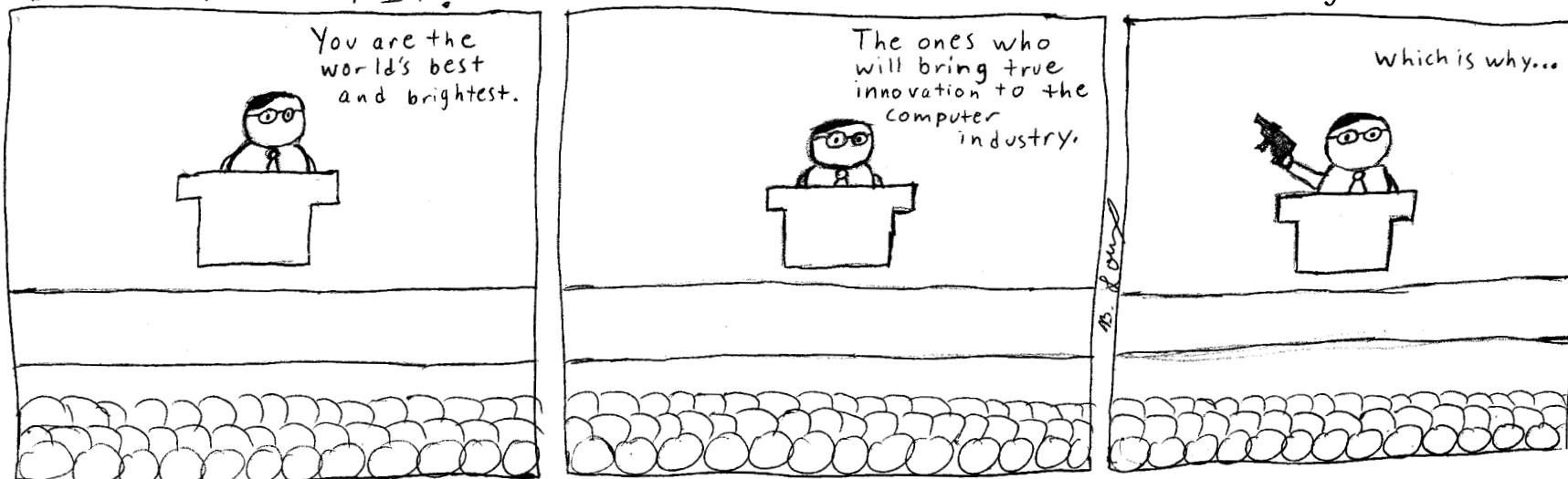
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by Emezie Okoafor



Bill Gates Speaks at MIT!

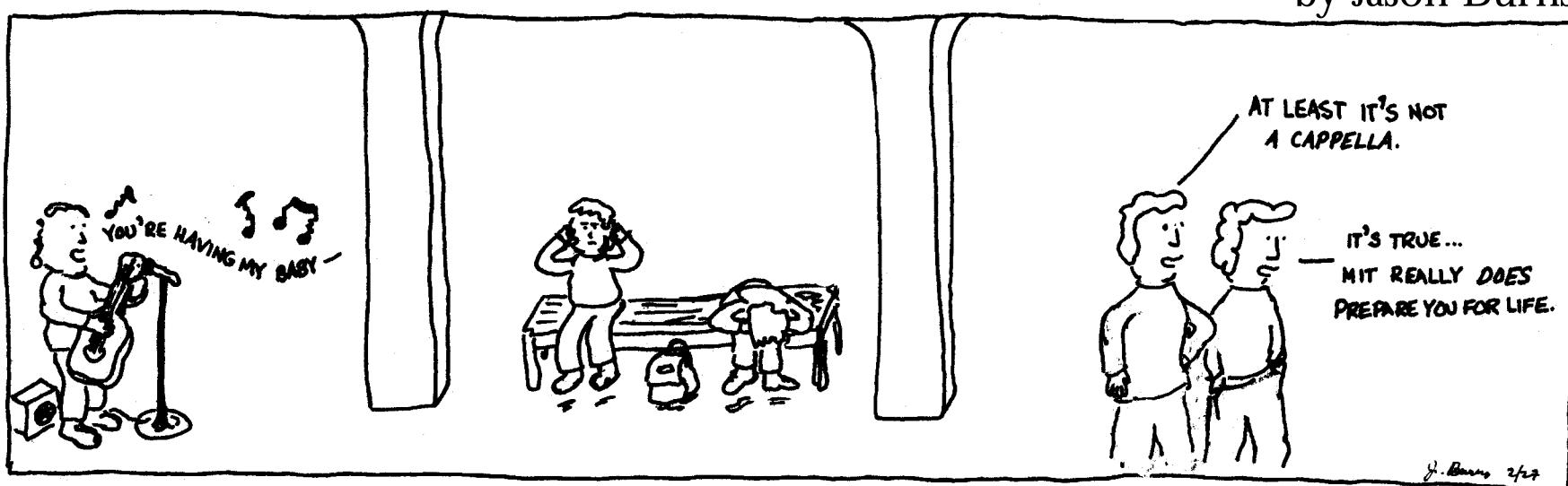
by Brian Loux



Filler Space

"NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND"

by Jason Burns



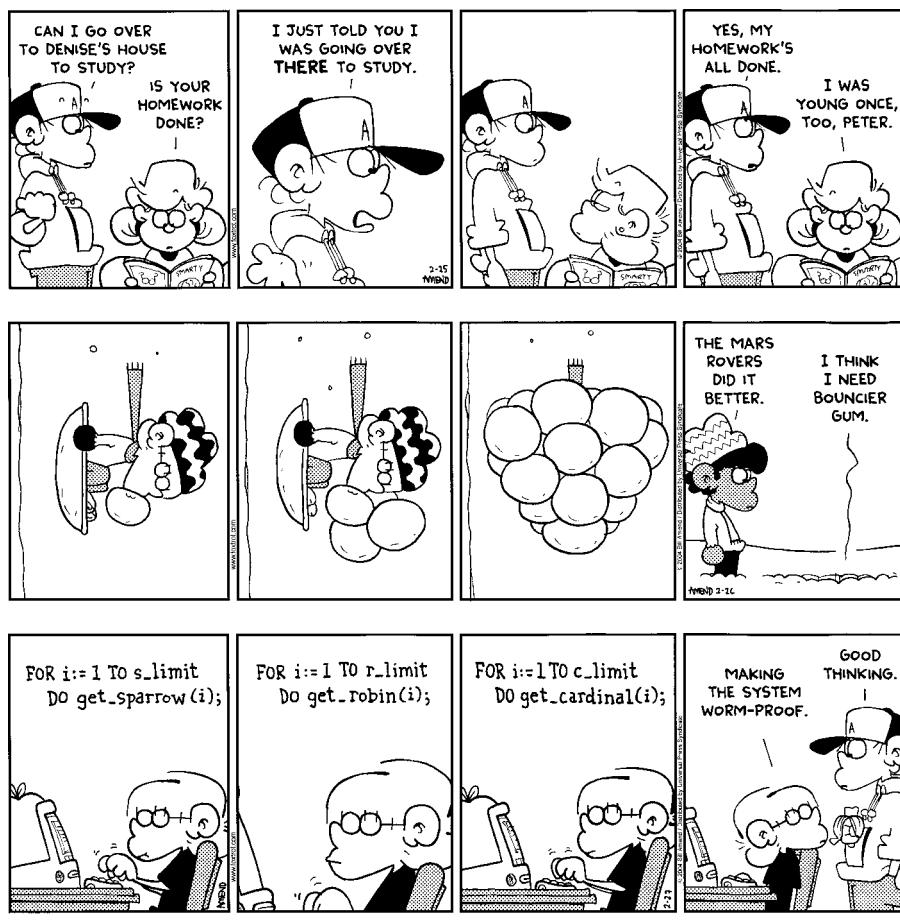
J. Burns 2/2



www.phdcomics.com

FoxTrot

by Bill Amend

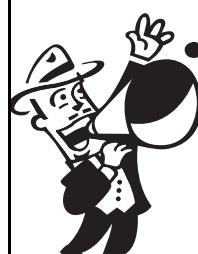


Crossword Puzzle

Solution, page 17

T-SHIRTS

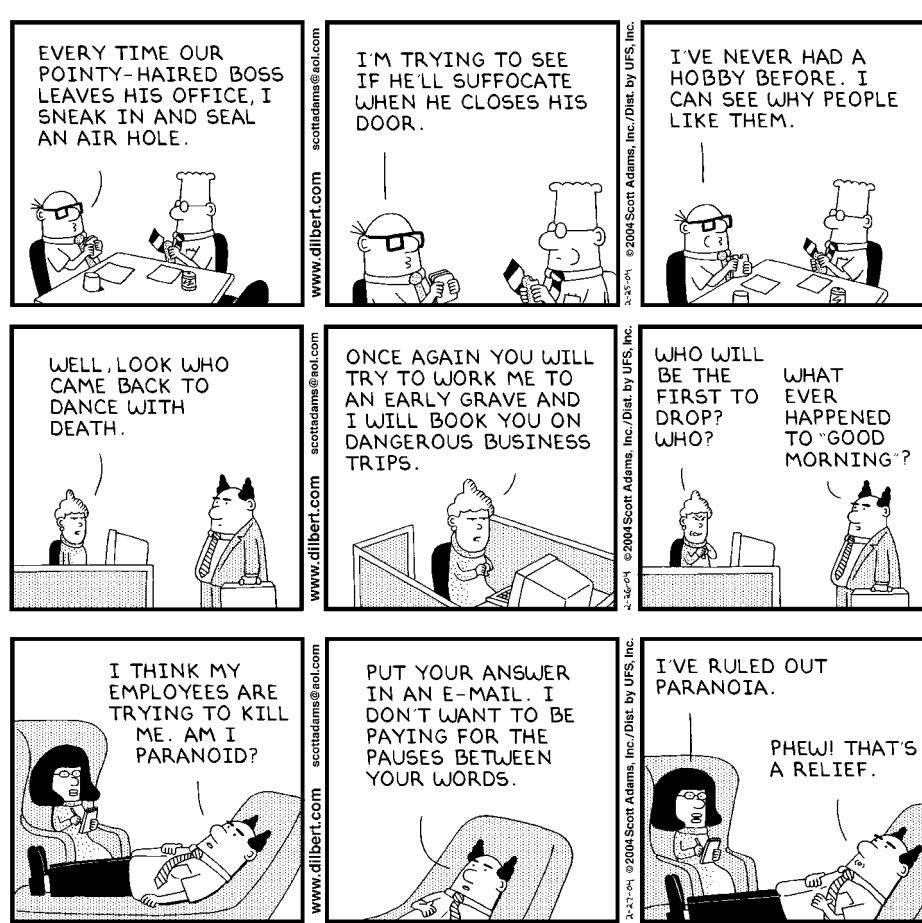
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ACROSS

ACROSS

- 1 Alma __
- 6 Assert confidently
- 10 Meadow mamas
- 14 Soap substitute
- 15 Occupation
- 16 Poet Teasdale
- 17 Amassed
- 18 Oahu garlands
- 19 Plan of land
- 20 South American condiment?
- 23 NASA's ISS partner
- 24 Jersey cager
- 25 World Series perfect-game pitcher
- 27 Descendant of Shem
- 31 Faith
- 33 Ladd or King
- 34 Kind of estate?
- 36 Integration grp.
- 39 Guys' sweeties

40 Latin beat

- 40 Latin beat
- 42 Talk to God
- 43 Singer Baker
- 45 Backside
- 46 The same, on the Seine
- 47 Bronze Stars
- 49 Made over
- 51 Definite forms
- 53 ___ Rafael, CA
- 54 Kubrick's computer
- 55 Italian actress?
- 62 Medicinal succulent
- 64 Actress Merrill
- 65 "Still Me" writer
- 66 Rip apart
- 67 Jacket or collar type
- 68 Book of maps
- 69 Hair colorings
- 70 Transmitted
- 71 Pellets

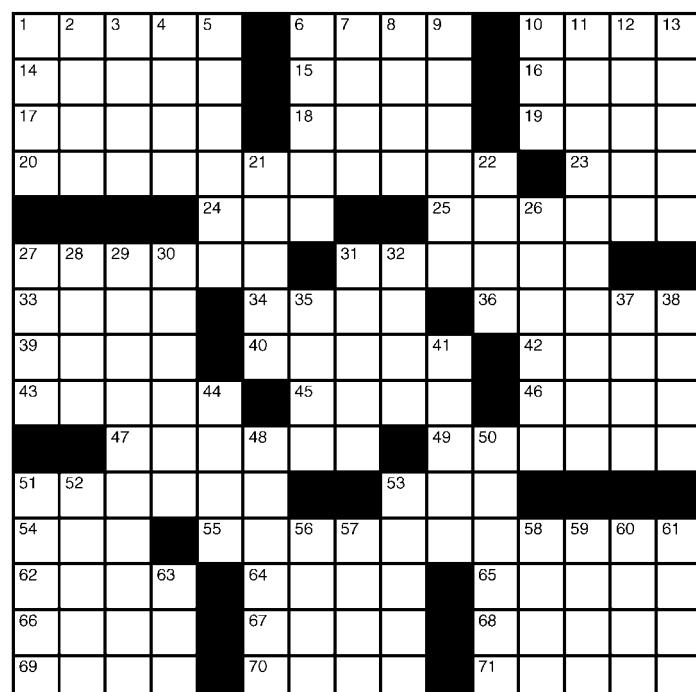
DOWN

DOWN

- 1 "Blue Horses"
- 2 painter
- 3 Oriental nanny
- 4 Singer Tennille
- 5 Hebrew month
- 6 Feel contrite
- 7 Apportion
- 8 Room's asset
- 9 Bagnold or Blyton
- 10 Deal in used goods
- 11 Psychic letters
- 12 U.K. bank?
- 13 Wipe out
- 14 The Evil One
- 21 People of equal status
- 22 Precipitation
- 26 Harvested
- 27 Heroic tale
- 28 Distinctive flair
- 29 African mussels
- 30 seller?
- 30 Top of the foot

31 Large, bound packages

- 32 Hostess Maxwell
- 35 English noble
- 37 "Misery" star
- 38 Journalist Ernie
- 41 Panoply
- 44 Fruit coolers
- 48 Sotto voce remarks
- 50 Catch
- 51 Piece of broken glass
- 52 Bill __ and the Comets
- 53 Point of view
- 56 Quote as an example
- 57 Party to
- 58 Himalayan Bigfoot
- 59 Find a buyer
- 60 Roundish shape
- 61 Capone's undoer
- 63 Begley and Wynn



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Events Calendar

Visit and add events to Events Calendar online at <http://events.mit.edu>

Friday, February 27

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Writers Group. New writers are invited to join our weekly Writers Group (sponsored by the Writing and Communication Center). Share a piece of your writing with other interested and supportive writers. Open to all MIT students, staff, faculty, and spouses. Free. Room: 14N-417. Sponsor: Writing and Communication Center.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Stellar Quick Start. Stellar(tm) 1.5, the latest release of MIT's online course management system, enables instructional staff to easily create a class Web site while offering students easy access to class information. This session will demonstrate how to use Stellar's Instructor Toolset to securely post class readings and announcements, manage homework assignments and submissions, facilitate online class discussions and more. For further information, see: <http://stellar.mit.edu/>. Room: N42 Demo Center. Sponsor: Information Systems.

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. - MIT/CRE Career Services Presentation. Career Profile: Non Profits — Community Builders, Mass Housing, Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America. Free. Room: W31-301. Sponsor: Center for Real Estate.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. - ACDL Seminar. Adaptive precision methodology for flow optimization via discretization and iteration error control. Free. Room: 33-206. Sponsor: AeroAstro.

4:00 p.m. - BCS Colloquium - Frank Keil, Ph.D. Talk Title: "The Emergence of Folkscience." Free. Room: E25-117. Sponsor: Brain and Cognitive Sciences.

4:00 p.m. - Varsity Women's Ice Hockey Invitational. Free. Room: Johnson Ice Rink.

4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. - Random Weighting, Asymptotic Counting, and Inverse Isoperimetry. Refreshments at 3:30 PM in Room 2-349. Free. Room 2-338. Sponsor: Combinatorics Seminar. Department of Mathematics.

6:00 p.m. - Shabbat Services & Dinner. Celebrate Shabbat. MIT Hillel's three religious communities hold Shabbat services at 6 p.m. (Conservative, Orthodox, and Reform) A community Shabbat dinner follows at 7 p.m. Cost for dinner only. Room: W11. Sponsor: Hillel, MIT.

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - GCF International Potluck. Come join us to celebrate the diverse cultures that we all come from with an international potluck! Free. Room: W20-306. Sponsor: Graduate Christian Fellowship, GSC Funding Board.

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Taste Of Eritrea. Come experience Eritrean culture. Learn about Eritrean Culture and the Present State of the Country. Enjoy an evening of free food, music, art, traditional clothing and cultural displays. Artifacts will be sold and auctioned. An after-party will follow the event at All Asia Cafe, 332 Mass Ave. Cambridge, MA. All proceeds will be donated to an Orphanage in Eritrea. Free. Room: 10-105. Sponsor: Chocolate City, Office of Minority Education, Eritrean Students in the Greater Boston Area.

6:15 p.m. - 6:50 p.m. - CCC Friday Dinner. Meet us for dinner before Real Life Boston in the Student Center's Alpine Bagel. Free. Room: Alpine Bagel. Sponsor: Campus Crusade for Christ.

6:55 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - CCC Real Life Boston. Did you know that there are 42 campuses in the greater Boston area? Well, wouldn't it be cool to fellowship with Christians from all these schools? You can! Campus Crusade for Christ and Park Street Church have a city wide college ministry. Real Life is a group of students from colleges all over Boston. The Campus Crusade for Christ Fellowships from all these schools get together to worship God, seek His will, and grow in our faith. MITCCC meets at 77 Mass Ave at 6:55 PM to take the #1 bus as a group. All are welcome! Free. Room: Student Center Steps. Sponsor: Campus Crusade for Christ.

7:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m. - MIT Anime Club Weekly Showing. The MIT Anime Club shows the best of both recent and classic Japanese animation. Showings are open to the public. Free. Room: 4-370. Sponsor: Anime Club, MIT, UA Finance

Board.

7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. - ACF Large Group meeting - Why is ACF Ethnic Specific? Worship, teaching, discussion, food, fun! Prayer meeting at 6 p.m. After event: Spectrum Posters + refreshments. Free. Room: McCormick Brown Living Room. Sponsor: Asian Christian Fellowship.

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Bible Study. Is there more to life than grad school? We believe the answer is "Yes!" Come study the word of God with us. There will be dinner provided and games afterward. Free. Room: 1-150. Sponsor: Asian Baptist Student Koinonia Graduate Division, GSC Funding Board.

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Koyaonisqatsi. \$3. Room: 26-100. Sponsor: LSC.

8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. - Lean Year Ball. An Evening of Ballroom and Latin Social Dancing. Featuring performance by local competitors. Attire: casual. Beginner Lesson - 7:30 with admission. \$12 general, \$8 students, \$5 MIT students. Room: La Sala de Puerto Rico. Sponsor: MIT Ballroom Dance Team.

8:00 p.m. - Kinaesthetics Lab Annual Performance. Kinaesthetics Lab is a student choreography group at MIT. The annual performance includes pieces choreographed by students as well as improvisation pieces. \$10, \$5 students. Room: Kresge Little Theater. Sponsor: Kinaesthetics Lab.

8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. - CSSA Dancing Party. Disco and ball room dancing. Free. Room: Loberdell, student center. Sponsor: Chinese Student and Scholar Association, GSC Funding Board.

8:00 p.m. - Roadkill Buffet: The Get Out of Line Show. MIT's improv troupe. Free. Room: Rm 6-120. Sponsor: Roadkill Buffet.

8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. - Patrol. Travel to strange new classrooms. Meet interesting, unusual people, and kill them! Patrol is a high-action game of live combat with rubber-dart guns. Shoot your friends, then watch out as they try to take their revenge. Free. Room: 36-115. Sponsor: Assassins' Guild, MIT.

8:00 p.m. - MIT Guest Artist Series: The American String Quartet. Peter Winograd, Laurie Carney, Daniel Avshalomov, and Margo Tatgenhorst Drakos perform Haydn's Quartet Opus 76, No. 1; Danielpour's Quartet No. 4; Brahms' Quartet Op. 51, No. 2. 4. Free. Room: Kresge Auditorium. Sponsor: Music and Theater Arts Section.

who were affected by it. We will follow up the screening with an informal discussion. Free. Room: 1-150. Sponsor: Association of Taiwanese Students, MIT.

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - 21 Grams. \$3. Room: 26-100. Sponsor: LSC.

7:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. - CSSA Movie Night. Two Free Chinese movies. <http://cssa.mit.edu/movie>. Free. Room: 54-100. Sponsor: Chinese Student and Scholar Association, GSC.

8:00 p.m. - Let Us Repeat the Name of God. The second part of the "Three Hundred Years of Turkish Music" concert series. The repetitive rhythms of Turkish religious zikir ceremonies are displayed along with African American Gospel music and Haitian vodoun. Free. Room: MIT Killian Hall. Sponsor: Turkish Students Association.

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10:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. - 21 Grams. \$3. Room: 26-100. Sponsor: LSC.

Sunday, February 29

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - F.A.S.T. Program: Yes, Virginia, It Is Rocket Science—Team America Rocketry Challenge. Aero/Astro presents exhibits and displays with an astronautics — rockets and spaceflight — theme. An MIT student team describes their adventure with a large (12-foot long), high-powered rocket of their own design. Free with MIT Museum admission. Room: MIT Museum. Sponsor: MIT Museum.

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Table Manners Auditions. Play by Alan Ayckbourn directed by Ronni Marshak. Auditions will consist of readings from the script; British accents will be required. Email Ronni at ronnimarshak@comcast.net to schedule an individual audition. Free. Room: Rm 24-307. Sponsor: MIT Community Players.

4:00 p.m. - An Afternoon with Sarah Vowell. Talk by the writer and radio storyteller from NPR's "This American Life." Free. Room: Rm 10-250. Sponsor: Office of the Arts. Alan Katzenstein Memorial Fund, Center for New Words.

7:00 p.m. - Spring 2004 Comedy Show. Live performances by Darrell Hammond and Colin Quinn. Event immediately followed by a student and alumni reception with a performance by the MIT Logs. \$12 students, \$15 non-students. Room: Kresge Auditorium. Sponsor: MIT Alumni Association.

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. - Koyaonisqatsi. \$3. Room: 26-100. Sponsor: LSC.

8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. - International Folk Dancing (participatory). International folk dancing. Teaching and beginners' dances from 8 to 9 p.m. A mixture of all skill levels from 9 to 11 p.m. Note: We will move to La Sala de Puerto Rico (on the second floor of the Student Center) if it is available. MIT/Wellesley students free; suggested donation \$1 from others. Room: Student Center room W20-491. Sponsor: Folk Dance Club.

10:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. - 21 Grams. \$3. Room: 26-100. Sponsor: LSC.

Commencement Committee

Council on Family and Work

Committee on Foreign Scholarships

Planning Committee for the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Activities

Medical Consumers' Advisory Council

Athletic Board

Committee on Campus Race Relations

ROTC Oversight Committee

Committee on Student Information Policy

Committee on Use of Human as Experimental Subjects

Women's Advisory Board

Corporation Joint Advisory Committee on Institute-Wide Affairs (CJAC)

Committee on Academic Performance

Committee on Curricula

Faculty Policy Committee

Committee on Library Systems

Committee on Student Life

Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid

Committee on Undergraduate Program

Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement

Hass Overview Committee

UA Election Commission

UA Head of Information Technology

Baker Foundation Committee

Undergraduate Association
Nominations Committee



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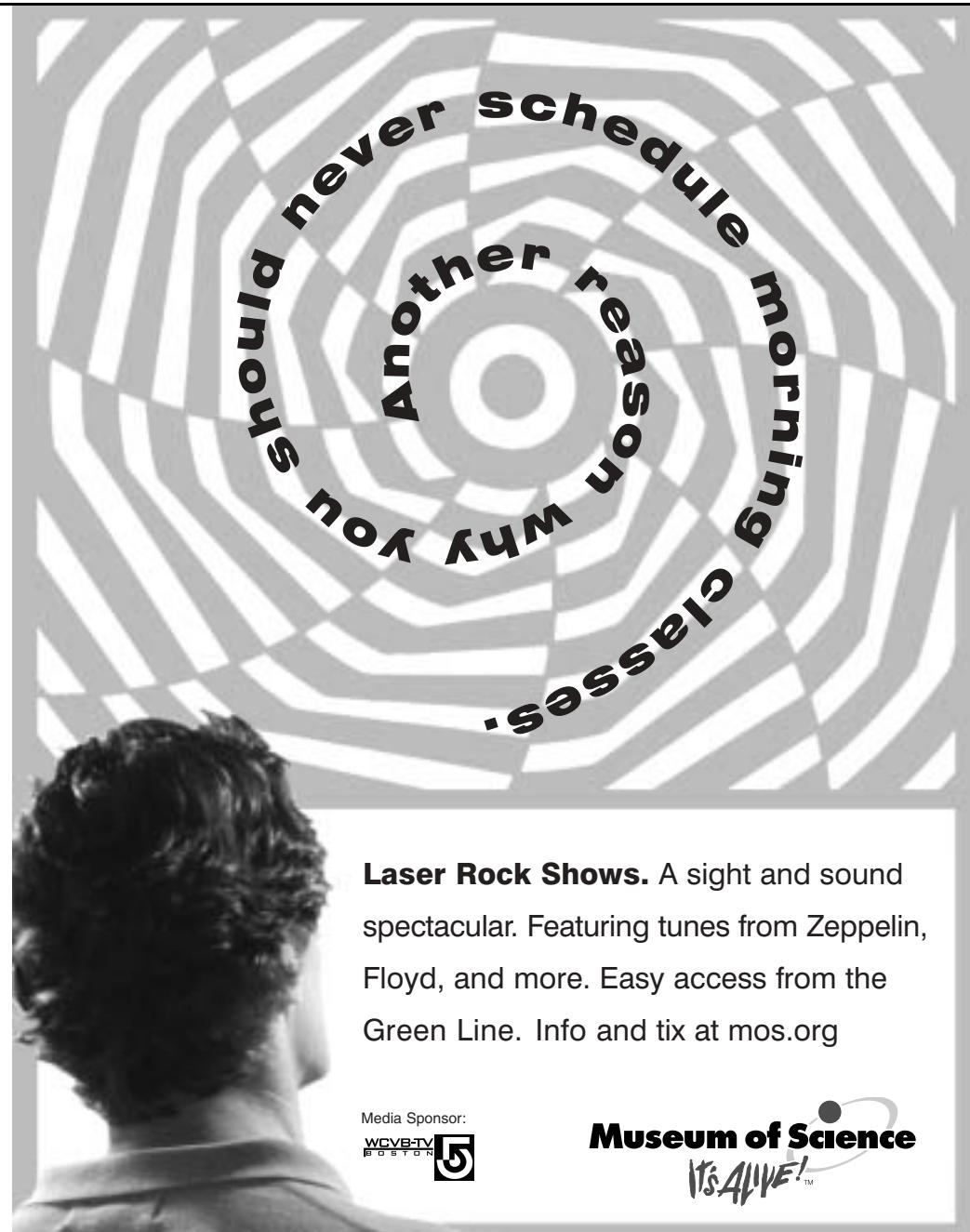
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or check out: <http://web.mit.edu/ua/www/committees/nomcomm/>

Applications due midnight, Wednesday, March 3rd

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UA Elections Begin With Some Positions Going Uncontested

By Kathy Lin
NEWS EDITOR

Fifteen individual and nine teams of candidates will officially begin campaigning for Undergraduate Association and class council positions at 5 p.m. tonight.

Some positions, including UA President, remain uncontested, and four are without candidates.

The deadline for registering to run for elected office was this past Wednesday. There are still no candidates for four positions: secretary for the class of 2005, publicity chairs for the class of 2005, secretary for the class of 2006, and publicity chairs for the class of 2006.

Some students have filed petitions for extensions for their paperwork. Students whose petitions were approved and students who wish to run for the open positions have until March 1 to turn in their paperwork.

Solomon M. Bisker '05, chair of the UA Election Commission, declined to release a list of names of people whose petitions have been granted.

Several positions uncontested

Harel M. Williams '05 and Philip A. Vasquez '05 are currently the only registered team running for the President and Vice President positions for the Undergraduate Association.

An uncontested presidential race has "never happened, that I know of," said Bisker.

Bisker said that the UA does

"intend to still have the [UA President and Vice President candidate] debate if we have a serious write-in campaign."

Nine positions in the class council elections are currently unopposed as well.

'Froshmores' may vote with 2007

Freshmen on sophomore standing are able to choose the class council for which they will cast their ballot.

The process for having the freshmen who declared sophomore standing appeal to vote for the class of 2007 instead of the class of 2006 "was streamlined a lot by having the 'froshmores' fill out [an appeal] form" when they filled out their sophomore standing form, said Bisker.

There is a "pretty big list" of freshmen on sophomore standing who asked to retain the right to vote for the class of 2007, Bisker said.

Election debate planned

"We've got debates coming up next week for the UA President and Vice President, and class council presidents," Bisker said.

The UA President and Vice President debate will be at 8 p.m. on Tuesday March 2, on the 1st floor of the Student Center. The class council presidents debate will be held at 8 p.m. on Wednesday March 3, also on the first floor of the Student Center.

Elections will be held online from March 8 through 13, with paper balloting taking place in Lobby 10 on March 12.

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Announcing the 2Be Diversity Project

The 2Be Diversity Project is a writing contest open to the entire MIT community. Contestants pick as the topic of an essay some aspect of themselves with which they identify that makes them feel diverse. It's a celebration of diversity!

**Writers' workshop April 7th
Essays due April 14th
Awards ceremony April 29th**

For more details go to:

<http://web.mit.edu/ccrr/grants/2Be.html>

Sponsored by the MIT Fund, CCRR, LBGT@MIT, GSC.

Gates: New Software Developments 'Underestimated'

Bill Gates, from Page 1

Globe, The Boston Herald, MIT Technology Review, and the Harvard Business Journal, Gates also discussed intelligent searching in an even broader fashion.

"Search today doesn't understand locality, it doesn't understand personalization," Gates said. "You ought to be able to type in 'Why is the sky blue?' and get an answer, not just get a bunch of people who want to sell you blue paint, and that's one of those great frontiers of computer science," he said.

'Desegregated' computing

Gates also predicted that the way we interact with computers will change dramatically. Tomorrow's computer will no longer be a device sitting at someone's desk, but a combination of peripherals working together to create the computing experience.

First of all, as the resolution of liquid crystal display (LCD) monitors improves, they will become more common in the workplace.

"In the future, we can assume a 30-inch LCD," on the desk of your average office, Gates said. "Three 22-inch displays, which is the configuration I'm using right now, lets me work with information in a more meaningful way," he said.

Furthermore, new technologies will change the way we work with computers. "As we get things like ultra-wide-band wireless, the idea that you connect the computer to a screen will become obsolete," Gates said. Instead, as you walk by

a monitor, you gain control over it, and it becomes the interface to your computer.

"We'll see the desegregation of the PC that way. The idea that the computer and the storage have to be associated with each other will be obsolete," he said.

Smarter computer input

Another integral component of the future of software is more natural human input. "All the natural interface techniques, vision, speech, we'll come to take those for granted in a very strong way," Gates said.

Speech recognition will play an even more central role in new software, thanks to advances in the field over the past decade, especially in situations where "the keyboard is relatively less effective," Gates said.

"We can already beat the fastest typists of Chinese with a Chinese speech recognition system," he said.

In addition to speech recognition, handwriting recognition — which Gates referred to as 'Ink' technology — is expected to become chic and commonplace.

Smarter code, security, games

Another field of research being developed at Microsoft Research coming into fruition is machine learning. Specifically, researchers are attempting to get machines to diagnose themselves more robustly.

One such example is proving properties of computer code. "Over 25 years ago, this idea of

proving program correctness was in vogue," Gates said, but as code grew larger and larger, it became unreasonable to continue to prove that programs will function as they should.

However, with new machine learning software, computers will be able to prove, or disprove with a counterexample, that code is not altering memory that it is not supposed to, for example. "We want to take everything that the programmer knows, and express those in as high a level as we can," Gates said.

Gates also foresees machine learning being used to diagnose problems in a system. Machine learning techniques can build a model and then use it to see if things are unusual. Such a model could analyze traffic on a network, for example, to measure whether the current behavior is normal. If it is not, it can block the abnormal components, preserving the system's integrity and security, said Gates.

Another application for machine learning, in the future, is in gaming. Gaming is "one place we're using our machine learning technology a lot," Gates said. Monitoring the actions of players on X-Box Live, the on-line multiplayer network system for Microsoft's X-Box gaming console, "we can take all the play styles that we're seeing across the network, and create any sort of level of difficulty or fashion of play," allowing for a dynamic level of challenge, he said.

Enhanced anti-spam tactics

Gates also discussed tactics that

Microsoft was planning to implement to combat spam. "Letting people send billions of pieces of mail very very cheaply devalues the time" of the recipient, Gates said.

To address this problem, mail "needs to be authenticatable. We announce on Tuesday a way to do that," Gates said.

If mail comes in from what the spam filter thinks is a stranger, some type of proof is required. This proof comes in a variety of forms. One type of proof requires the sender's computer to perform a computer-intensive computation to verify its identity, Gates said.

The reasoning behind this is that for mail with a few recipients, the computation is not a huge problem, but for mass-mailing it becomes virtually infeasible.

Another type of proof that Gates proposed was that, for each e-mail that is suspected to be spam, the sender must put "a little money at risk." If the recipient deems that it is spam, he or she at least can elect to keep the risk money that came with the message, thereby making spam a much more financially difficult business strategy to use.

Finally, the third type of proof is just sending a message back to the sender that contains a problem that is difficult for a computer to solve, but easy for a human to solve (such as reading text), to verify that the mail did indeed originate from a human.

Decade of software innovation

Despite the boom in technology-related industries in the late part of last decade, Gates claims that this is the decade of software innovation.

"I think there's this paradox that computer science was very hot between '98 to 2001," Gates told the press round table yesterday morning.

Ironically, during those years, "there wasn't that much progress in computer science. If anything, that period revealed some of the things we haven't solved, in terms of scaling, reliability, security, privacy, and making these things pervasive," he said.

Now, such technologies exist, but "the impact of these computer science advances over the next ten years are being totally underestimated," he said.

Since both the technologies and the ideas are now present, software will experience a huge boom with significant advances. Now, it is time for "bringing the methodologies of machine learning and modeling and rich data mining into all of the hard sciences," he said in his speech.

He went on to cite an example of how computer science and the hard sciences, traditionally fairly separated, would converge, thanks to this new technology. Specifically, he referred to a project done by Microsoft Research which linked several repositories of astronomical data together.

This new tool then allows astronomers to search for phenomena and test hypotheses, using the massive collection of data. Astronomy is no longer about "being up at three in the morning with your eye to the lens when a supernova explodes," Gates said.

High-end CS jobs not threatened

Gates assured the press round table that, despite the fact that many high-tech jobs are being moved overseas, there will still be a market for high-end jobs in computer science in the United States.

"One thing I can say for sure is that the most complex work in computer science is one of the few things I can say that will stay here in the United States, overwhelmingly," Gates said.

"We're going to be doing the lion's share of our work here in the United States. We do very complex development work, partly

because of the great universities here, partly because the U.S. draws in talent from outside the U.S., he said."

He then went on to assure MIT and Harvard graduates that they would have no trouble finding work in the field of computer science. "Getting a job, from any one of these top universities in computer science, there won't be some lack of job opportunities."

However, he said that only the higher-end technology jobs would remain in the United States. "If you're just training to be somebody who answers the phone, you might wonder if your job will be in India and China," Gates said. "Global competition is happening in all job categories."

Gates: patents reward invention

At the end of Gates's speech, one student asked Gates what he thought about software patents, in light of the fact that Microsoft lost a \$521 million dollar lawsuit against Eolas, a decision which was later upheld on Jan. 14, 2004 in a federal district court, according to *The New York Times* of Feb. 2.

Eolas's patent covers automatically executing plug-ins in a web browser, something that Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser, and most others, does.

The Tech also asked Gates whether or not he felt that patents were an effective way to reward software innovation, earlier that morning.

Gates, despite the lawsuit, was still optimistic about the patent system. "The patent system is not perfect, but it's a system that has worked amazingly well," Gates said after the speech.

Gates went into more detail with *The Tech*, saying that patents were necessary to encourage people to invent. "There's gotta be a system that rewards invention, and the patent system has done a great job over hundreds of years in rewarding invention," Gates said.

The patent system is one which "people tend to look at isolated cases and say 'Ok, well what about this case.' But what they don't really look at is, that's why people fund research. That's why all this invention is taking place," he said.

Gates encourages risk, innovation

Another listener asked Gates if he were currently 19 years old and an MIT student with a brilliant new idea, whether he would continue his education or drop out and create a company, as he did with Microsoft.

"I loved going to school. There were very smart people around to talk to every day, they fed you every day, you didn't have to go to classes, if you worked a little bit they'd give you this positive reinforcement," Gates said.

However, "if I were a student today, I'd certainly be looking for some paradigm shift that could make a dramatic change," he said. "I'd say that anyone who has in mind a deep paradigm shift for an industry, go ahead, take the risk, go away for a couple of years," he said.

Anti-Microsoft handouts

Before the speech began, some students of unknown affiliation distributed double-sided yellow leaflets to the audience.

One side said, "If you ever want to see your computer virus-free again, follow the instructions on the slide of this card very carefully."

The opposite side contained the "URGENT Windows Vulnerability Notification" message sent to MIT students early in the Fall semester, telling people to upgrade their computers to protect against the Blaster worm. This message had the text "Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain" stamped on it, in all caps and in red.

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Stars on Ring Spark Questions; Student Web Site Hosts Survey

Ring, from Page 1

ring premiere last Saturday says that the letters are meant as a reflection of "the new rule that all freshmen, regardless of their Greek affiliation, must live on campus."

On a Web site addressing frequently asked questions, <http://web.mit.edu/2006ring-comm/Webpages/FAQs.htm>, the ring committee explains their choice of the letters phi and theta.

"It is the nature of the ring to reflect major policy changes that the Institute makes during our time here. For the sake of brevity and not mentioning any specific FSILGs during premiere, the selection process of the two Greek letters was abbreviated to 'the two letters occurring with the most frequency.'"

"We also had to make sure that no specific FSILG's were referenced directly by the way their names are spoken at MIT. Phi was an obvious first letter with 17 occurrences, next was Alpha with 11, but the two together would have spelled Alpha Phi, a sorority."

"Tied for third were Sigma and Theta with 10. Sigma would have referenced Phi Sigma Kappa, better known as Phi Sig, a fraternity."

"The combination of Phi and Theta has no direct reference to any of the Greek organizations on campus. There is no organization that is referred to by these two letters."

Survey rates letters, stars

Stanway said that the survey, at <http://ring2006.mit.edu>, uses certificates for credibility. It asks users two questions with a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "I like it" and 5 meaning "I don't want it on my rat."

At time of press, the average response from members of the Class of 2006 to the question "how do you feel about the greek letters under the skyline?" was 4.40.

The average response from members of the Class of 2006 to "how do you feel about the unexplained twin stars on the bezel and shank, a possible reference to a specific living group's symbol?" was 3.65.

These numbers are based on 172 responses, or 17.5 percent of the class of 2006.

Stars on bezel, shank questioned

Stanway said that the two stars concerned him because of their resemblance to the twin star insignia for the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority.

The ring committee Web site says that "the stars that appear on the ring are a part of the 'Starry Night' scene that we chose to represent. They in no way represent the affiliation of any members of the Ring Committee."

"The stars were not specifically mentioned during Premiere because they are purely aesthetic and have no symbolic meaning. We thought the mention that we included a 'Starry Night' motif in the sky for two of the sides would be enough. In fact, they were a suggestion from the company artist who drew the ring design, not a suggestion from a committee member."

"Finally, be aware that every motion that was made during the design process required more than a 2/3 vote to be passed, which ensured that the committee never voted favorably on a symbol which represented only a small part of the group."

Stanway said that he had spoken with Class of 2006 President Raphael Farzan-Kashani '06 during the week about his concerns.

"Raphael tried to explain to me the rationale behind the things on the ring and to get us to not open up this whole can of worms," Stanway said. "The way he explained the stars were sufficient for me personally."

Four of the ring committee members, Tania D. Das '06, Valerie

Y. Kuo '06, Lucy Y. Li '06, and Wey-Jiun Lin '06, are affiliated with Kappa Alpha Theta.

Diversity considered in committee

"One thing that is kind of a misconception, at the time we selected the committee, only two of them were in Kappa Alpha Theta. The other two pledged in the past year," said Class of 2006 Vice President Brendan J. Smith '06, who was involved in the process of selecting the committee. "We made every effort to select a diverse committee as well as a talented one."

"There's so much thought that went into everything that went onto the ring," said Smith. "People don't understand that. I've heard so many misinterpretations about what the symbols represent."

"We did the best we could, we picked the best people. At the end of the section process, I was thrilled with the people we picked. After seeing the ring, I think we definitely did a good job."

"There's so much thought that went into everything that went onto the ring," said Smith. "People don't understand that. I've heard so many misinterpretations about what the symbols represent."

"I think people get the impression that we're mad at ringcomm and what they did," Stanway said. "We're actually very impressed with what ringcomm did on the whole, but the letters are something that are unnecessary, out of place, and inappropriate."

Lauren E. LeBon contributed to the reporting of this story.

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Task Force Reviews Academic 'Mission'

GIR, from Page 1

"We're hoping to analyze all of the current GIRs, determining which aspect of MIT's educational mission each one is intended to fulfill and whether it accomplishes that goal," Greenwood said. "We will leave no GIR unturned, so to speak."

First review of GIRs in decades

The task force, created by MIT President Charles M. Vest, was created to review and detail the goals and the structure of the general undergraduate educational experience for the first time in about 50 years. The four undergraduate representatives are complimented by 20 faculty members, and is expected to finish in 2006.

According to the Vest's charge,

the specific goals of the task force are to:

— Review the statement of MIT's Educational Mission, including the reasoning and assumptions of educational and societal context that support it, and then reaffirm or modify it as deemed appropriate.

— Derive from the educational mission a specific set of Goals for the education of all MIT undergraduate students

— Develop and articulate, at an appropriate level of definition, the 'Content' of the curriculum that should be common to the education of all MIT undergraduate students

— Develop and recommend to the MIT faculty the formal 'Structure' of the MIT undergraduate curriculum, expressed in a set of General Institute Requirements or an alternative formulation."



David K. Milovich '04 (left), Stephanie S. Covagnaro-Wong '06, and Clay M. Viands '06 are the first to wait outside 10-250 for the Chorallaries' Nth Annual Concert in Bad Taste.

JONATHAN WANG—THE TECH

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from page 11

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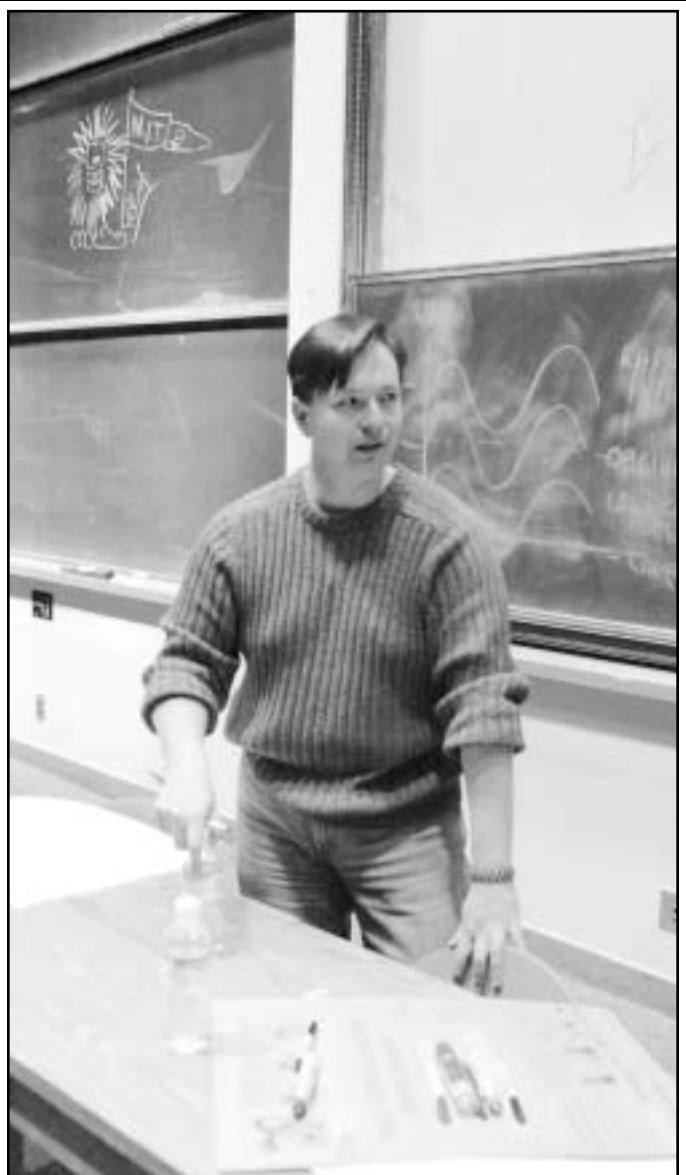
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JONATHAN WANG—THE TECH

J.D. "Illiad" Frazer answers questions after giving a lecture on his webcomic, *User Friendly*, in 10-250 Thursday night. The lecture was second of three in LSC's New Funnies Lecture Series.

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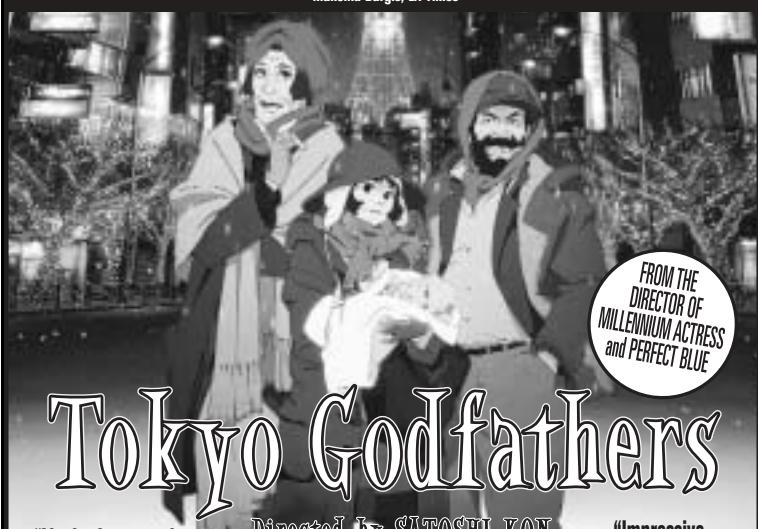
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William M. Kettry — MIT Medical Director

Claude R. Canizares — Associate Provost and Professor of Physics

Wesley L. Harris — Department Head, Aeronautics and Astronautics

Katya Myer — Hillel Program Director

Irwin A. Pless — Professor of Physics, Emeritus

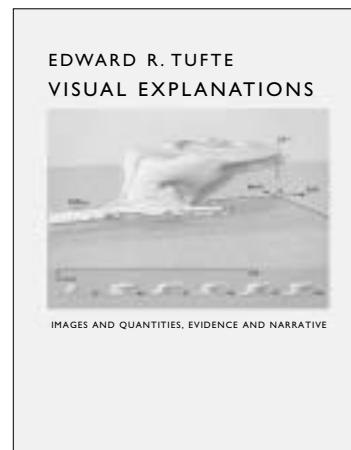
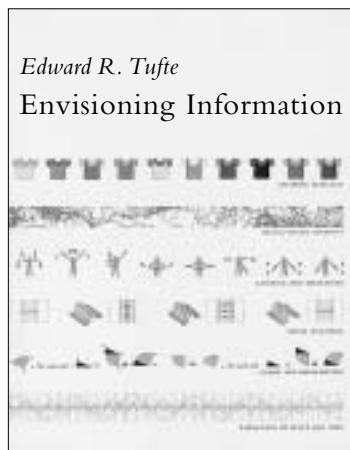
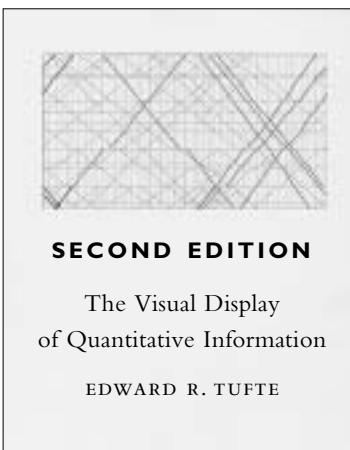
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Weather Aside, Baseball Fans Know Spring is Here

By Yong-Yi Zhu
COLUMNIST

The joys that spring brings are finally beginning to appear. Fresh air, warm weather, and green

Column grass are delights that Mother Nature gifts us with when we turn the calendar from February to March. But of course, I'm only referring to the weather in Florida, not in the New England area. Who cares about Boston anyway, when spring training, the real gem of the season, commences and brings joy back into the hearts of all baseball fans? For the Red Sox this season, spring may be the best time of year. The only other time which can possibly beat it will be the end of October, if the Sox can win the World Series.

Spring is a time for baseball media and fans to speculate about the season, and they will speculate to no end. This season, unlike many seasons previous, has many

placing the Red Sox atop the American League East. Well, at least they're perceived to be just as good as the Yankees. Not only have the Sox kept most of their firepower from last season, but they have even made additions at key positions to the roster. Despite some slight setbacks during the off-season, the Sox have still come out quite favorably in terms of acquiring free agents and making trades. The most important acquisition was Curt Schilling. Schilling adds another solid starter to the pitching rotation and brings with him a sense of intensity which helps to elevate the skills of all the players around him, Pedro Martinez included. Not that the Sox's starting rotation was terrible last year, but production significantly declined after Martinez and Derek Lowe. Not even Tim Wakefield was that successful until the beginning of the postseason. However this year, as Martinez pointed out on Tuesday,

the Sox can bring the equivalent of four Pedros to the mound. Martinez, Schilling and Lowe have each started an All Star game. Wakefield has become a significantly better pitcher, and according to Schilling, BK Kim can be a 20-game starter (we shall see about that).

Keith Foulke will be another huge contributor to the Sox pitching. Last year, even with Kim as a part time closer for the Red Sox, there was not much relief brought by the relief pitchers. Foulke will help to solidify the bullpen by no longer requiring the "closer by committee" tactic. Foulke had a 43 save, 2.08 ERA season last year; compare that with a committee who only saved 36 games all of last season. Another staple in the bullpen will be relief pitcher Mike Timlin. Timlin performed well in the playoffs and his success will be key for the Red Sox, in order to take some of the heat off of both the starting pitchers

and Foulke.

Perhaps another factor, one that is often overlooked, is that many of the core Red Sox players will be entering into the final season of their contract. Theo Epstein has not made any promises as to who he will re-sign after the season, and he is keeping his plans a secret in order to motivate the players to perform better. Of course the better a player plays, the bigger the contract he can ask for after the season. Just take Javy Lopez, catcher for the Baltimore Orioles, for example. Although his statistics were never stellar any other season, his record-breaking year last year gave Lopez a huge contract this off-season to the tune of \$22.5 million over three years. Let's just say if all the Sox who are potential free agents next year — namely Pedro Martinez, Nomar Garciaparra, Derek Lowe, Jason Varitek, David Ortiz, Scott Williamson, Pokey Reese, and Doug Mirabelli — and each per-

forms as well as Javy Lopez did last year, the Sox can be guaranteed the American League East crown.

With all of the positives, one can only think that this is finally the year for the Red Sox to break the curse. Anticipation has become so high that perhaps the city of Boston should declare April 16, the first day that the Red Sox and the Yankees will meet at Fenway, a city holiday. Curt Schilling has already declared himself the projected starter for that night. There has been some guesswork done as to how much boozing Alex Rodriguez will receive when he is introduced. I'm sure there is wagering going on all over New England between Bostonians and New Yorkers as to who will win the game, the AL East, and the World Series. But for now, let's just enjoy all that good Bostonian weather and wait for the real holiday, Opening Day, to finally arrive.

MIT Students Compete, Struggle In BU-Hosted Figure Skating Meet

By Diana S. Cheng
TEAM MEMBER

Six MIT students competed at the United States Figure Skating's intercollegiate figure skating competition on the weekend of Feb. 21-22, 2004 held at Boston University's Walter Brown Arena. The team entered five individual events and one team event.

Stephanie Lee '07 skated the Fourteen Step in the Novice solo dance event, against seven other skaters. She earned a silver medal in her first intercollegiate competition.

In the intermediate dance event, Sheila Tandon G skated to "The Hickory Hoedown" and earned a bronze medal. There were seven skaters in her event. She chose to compete with skaters who had tested this dance already, while she

learned this dance in the month preceding the competition.

In the pre-intermediate C free skate event, Adrienne Hunacek '07 placed 12th out of 15 skaters with her program to music from Miss Saigon. She attempted a double salchow.

In the pre-intermediate B free skate event, Diana S. Cheng '04 skated her two minute program, placing 11th out of 18. She missed her camel-sit spin in the middle of the program, so at the end of the program, she replaced her upright-change-upright spin with a camel-sit-change-upright spin. She also skated to "The Dutch Waltz" in the pre-Intermediate A solo dance event, the equivalent of preliminary dance. She finished in last place out of 18.

The figure skating team also entered a Low Maneuvers team: Cheng, Delphine Dean G, John B.

Gonzalez '04, and Hunacek. Hunacek contributed an axel and a salchow, Cheng did a camel-sit spin and an upright-change-upright spin, Gonzalez did a waltz-toe loop jump combination, and Dean skated a circular step sequence which she created in the past week. The team placed in the top ten.

On Saturday, March 13, the figure skating club will host and compete at the intercollegiate figure skating competition held at MIT's Johnson Rink.

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SPORTS

MIT Women Set Many Records In NEWMAC Finals

Victoria K. Anderson
TEAM MEMBER

The MIT Women's Swimming and Diving team took second place at the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference Championships Feb. 20-22 with a total team score of 642 points. Springfield College, the overall team champion, scored 1027.5 points, while third-place Wellesley finished with 558 points. Throughout the weekend, seven MIT swimmers posted automatic or provisional national qualifying times and five broke championship meet records. A total of nine institute records fell during the three days of competition.

The Beavers started out the first day of competition by taking first

place in the 200-yard freestyle relay, as the team of Kathryn M. Duffy '04, Georgene M. Hilb '04, Stephanie A. Sidelko '07, and Erin M. Zoller '05 finished in 1:40.01. In the first individual event of the meet, Katherine C. Thornton '07 took second in the 500 freestyle with a time of 5:06.45, just short of the 5:05.39 that she swam in the preliminary session to break her own institute record in the event. Jen-Jen La'o '05 also scored a second-place finish in the 200 Individual Medley (IM), breaking a 24-year-old institute record with her time of 2:14.03. Duffy claimed first in the 50 freestyle with a 24.09, falling inches short of the 24.05 that she swam in preliminaries to set new institute, conference, and championship meet records. Both times meet the auto-

matic national qualification standard, assuring the Beavers representation at the NCAA Division III Championships. In the final event of the first day, Zoller, Melissa E. Dere '06, Hilb, and Duffy placed second to Springfield in the 400 medley relay with their time of 4:05.12.

The second day of competition saw the 200 medley relay team of Zoller, Dere, Thornton, and Sidelko place fourth with a time of 1:55.30. La'o set institute, conference, and championship meet records en route to her victory in the 400 IM, with a provisional national qualifying time of 4:41.72. Duffy also posted a record-breaking time while winning the 200 freestyle. Her provisional national qualifying time of 1:54.15 broke institute, conference, and championship meet records. The

closing event of the second day, the 800 freestyle relay, was a thrilling chase to the end, with the MIT and Springfield teams separated by no more than two seconds at any point of the nearly eight-minute race. The MIT team of Thornton, Hilb, Jennifer J. DeBoer '05, and Duffy touched first with a time of 7:46.43 to Springfield's 7:46.79, setting new institute, conference, and championship meet records and posting a provisional national qualifying time.

On the final day of competition, Thornton outdistanced the competition in the longest event of the meet, the 1650 freestyle. She won with a time of 17:37.74, which set a new conference meet record and fell under the provisional national qualifying time. Duffy continued her assault on the record books, taking

the 100 freestyle by over two seconds. Her institute, conference, and championship record time of 51.82 also fell under the automatic national qualifying time. Dere established a new institute record of 2:28.14 in the 200 breast as she took second place and made the list of provisional national qualifiers. Hilb won the final individual event of the meet, the 200 butterfly, with a provisional national qualifying time of 2:12.14.

Closing out the official competition of the meet, the 400 freestyle relay of DeBoer, Hilb, Zoller, and Duffy finished second with a national provisional qualifying time of 3:36.61. Duffy also competed in an unofficial 50 breaststroke time trial that led to her final institute record of the meet, when she touched in 31.32.

Two Straight Wins Keep MIT Volleyball on Streak

By Paul Dill

TEAM COACH

The Varsity Men's Volleyball Team went 2-0 this past week to improve their overall record to 9-6, and their NECVA conference record to 8-4.

The Engineers first went on the road to face a very fiery Newbury College squad. MIT took control of the match from the beginning winning the first two games without much difficulty. The third game proved to be a test for the Engineers as they found themselves down 24-26. MIT would maintain their composure and come back to win the game 30-28 and the match 3-0. The offense was led by Rob McAndrew '05 who scored 16 kills in the effort, and Kabir Mukaddum '05 who had 13 kills on 21 attempts with no errors for a .619 hitting percentage.

In their next match against Wentworth Institute of Technology, the Engineers would again start strong taking the first game 30-22. The second game would push MIT to the brink, as they found themselves down 26-28. For the second time in two matches, however, MIT would push back to take what was a pivotal game in the match 33-31.

The Engineers would never look back as they carried the momentum into the third game winning 30-23 to take the match 3-0. McAndrew and Mukaddum would lead the way again with 22 and 11 kills respectively. Setter Jordan Wan '06 was also instrumental as he would run an extremely efficient offense dishing out 42 assists.

The team has improved considerably as the season has progressed, winning six of their last seven matches placing them fourth in the ten team New England Division of the NECVA Conference.

CU's Price for Playing Division I

By Brian Chase
SPORTS EDITOR

Right now, Gary Barnett is in hell. In the last three weeks, six women have come forward to accuse players on the Colorado University football team, which Barnett coaches, of raping and/or molesting them. One was Katie Hnida, one of the first female Division I football players and a kicker for the Buffaloes before 2000. Katie confessed to Sports Illustrated's Rick Reilly that she had been groped, grabbed, insulted, abused physically and verbally, and finally raped while she was on the team.

All these allegations come on the heels of accusations that the Colorado program uses sex and wild parties to recruit their players. As of this article, Barnett has been suspended by CU, and would have been fired outright if he was not being sued over these events (CU is required to keep him an employee in order to give him due process). Barnett's reputation is ruined, he may never coach again. But the absolute capper is that Barnett doesn't think he deserves any of this.

Barnett has repeatedly denied all these allegations made against his football team. He was supported by several CU recruits who have said that they saw no such "sex parties" while at Colorado. On Larry King Live, Barnett expressed his disbelief in the charges, and also said he felt he would be reinstated.

This brings up a couple of interesting points. First, is Barnett blind? An idiot could see that CU will never bring him back. The administration has appointed a special liaison to investigate the charges, and are trying very hard to pin Barnett as the scapegoat so they won't lose their jobs. Second, and more importantly, is Barnett culpable? As he pointed out, it is nearly impossible to keep track of an entire football team. Barnett

enforces a 1 a.m. curfew, one of the earliest in Division I. But Hnida was a member of his own team, and was abused in the middle of practice. How did Barnett respond to her allegations? "She was awful," he said, referring to her playing skills. He implied that she got no respect because she couldn't kick well. The truth is, Barnett cared more about the players he recruited than Katie, who he was forced to enlist, so he either didn't notice, or didn't care about the abuse she was receiving. For her rape at least, I feel Barnett is partially to blame. Maybe he was too busy trying to win to prevent his players from abusing a teammate.

This whole CU scandal raises a question of Division I sports in general: Can they exist without the sex, drug, and money issues that are thrown before our faces every day? Other colleges and coaches around the country have been accused of similar sex recruitment policies as CU recently, and several coaches have undergone embarrassing scandals (Mike Price, Larry Eustachy, anyone?). To me, the answer is no. At this point, major Division I sports are a form of high stakes, money-making entertainment, which panders to the fans, not the student/athletes who are on the teams. And because these teams play to win and make money, and not to educate and improve the players, they recruit with sex, recruit possible talents that have respect, drug or discipline problems, and smooth over their crimes in order to get them on the field. If college sports were really educating the players, they would have enough discipline and respect to avoid raping the first woman they see. And if coaches really had education first, and not winning, they would pay more attention how their team is behaving on and off the field.

But I guess that is pretty impossible in Division I now. Barnett might agree, if he were completely candid. This is why I am glad MIT doesn't have Division I sports. Admittedly, this is mostly because MIT is focused on high-end scientific and engineering education, and not earning as much sports money as it can. But shouldn't every school be that way? I feel convinced that should MIT raise the money and build the facilities to field Division I teams, it would be drawn into this same circle of hypocrisy that envelopes so many other universities in the country. Unfortunately, those universities make hypocrites out of many people, including myself, because while I might be glad MIT isn't Division I, and while I might rail against the Gary Barnetts of the world, that doesn't stop me from watching and enjoying the sports Division I players produce.

Hopefully, someday, we can turn major college sports into its own business, divorce it from the universities entirely, and end the circle of sex, drugs, and money that infects the system.

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